स्टॉक हम अपने देश में हमेशा रखते हैं। इसलिए कोई संकट आ गया, सूखा आ गया, फलड्स आ गए, तो ऐसी परिस्थिति में भी लोगों की अनाज की जो रिक्वायरमेंट है, उसे पूरी करने की ताकत आज सरकार के भंडारों में है और इस बारे में चिन्ता करने की कोई आवश्यकता नहीं है।

जहाँ तक आपने यूनिवर्सिटी की बात बताई है, आज देश में टोटल एग्रीकल्चर यूनिवर्सिटीज़ 39 हैं और सेंट्रल यूनिवर्सिटीज़ दो हैं। देश की एग्रीकल्चर यूनिवर्सिटीज़ की जो रिक्वायरमेंट है, इससे भी ज्यादा यूनिवर्सिटीज़ हमारे यहाँ हैं। आज नई यूनिवर्सिटी खोलने की आवश्यकता नहीं है। आज की जो यूनिवर्सिटीज़ हैं, यदि उन्होंने अपने-अपने क्षेत्र में पूरा काम किया, ज्यादा ध्यान दिया, तो इस क्षेत्र में जो रिसर्च एंड एजुकेशन, इन दोनों क्षेत्रों में जो काम करना हैं, वह पूरा हो सकता हैं।

श्री उपसभापतिः आपका सेकंड सप्लीमेंटरी तो नहीं है न। डा॰ टी॰ सुब्बारामी रेड्डी जी।

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Sir, we all know that agriculture is very important for the Indian economy. In this connection, I would like to know whether India has approached developed countries to provide us the latest technology in agriculture and also improve our scientific universities in the country to train more and more scientists in order to provide impetus to this agriculture sector.

Secondly, the hon. Prime Minister while inaugurating the Indian office of the International Food Policy for Research Institute in the Campus has pointed out that private-public partnership could play a pivotal role for bringing about second Green Revolution to stimulate the agriculture sector that sustains around 60 per cent of the country's population. What action is the Agriculture Ministry taking on what the Prime Minister has stated? What action is the Ministry taking to approach various developed countries to get the latest technology and the scientific approach?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Sir, the farming community and the scientific community of this country, which are working for years together in various agricultural universities and various institutions which have been set up under the umbrella of the ICAR, have contributed a lot. We have succeeded to resolve the basic problem of food security; and the credit goes to the farmers. There are no two opinions about it. We are self-sufficient today. We are also exporting a little bit of surplus foodgrains. But if we study the overall growth rate of our populaltion, it shows that in another five to seven years' time, the requirment of foodgrains would be definitely more. From that angle, the hon. Prime Minister has made a statement that the country needs second Green Revolution. If we have to, ultimately, fulfil the desire

of the Prime Minister, we shall have to take many corrective steps. A number of steps have been taken during this year. The important question, which was put by the hon. Member, was whether we have discussed it or have got any information or have arrived at any udnerstanding with some of the developed countries. Recently, the Prime Minister had visited America. In his US visit, he had a detailed discussion with the American authorities, including the American President. We have reached an understanding and we have signed one Knowledge Initiative Agreement between India and the USA. The main idea of the Knowledge Initiative Agreement is, whatever advance stage of research they have, that should be given to India. That is one thing. Secondly, there is an understanding between the two countries in the area of agriculture education. Recently, I had visited Israel. We had a discussion with the Government of Israel on the proposal whether we can take support from the Israeli Government in the area of rainfed agriculture, in the area of horticulture and in the area of upgradation of cattle genetically and by other means.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I would first like to thank the hon. Minister for giving quite a substantial reply. But there are areas of concern as well. If I see the reply, a very substantial proportion of our agriculture produce is for commercial purposes, not for subsistence. But our global share in agriculture export is only 1.15 per cent. Obviously, so far as milk production is concerned, we are on the top. This is a serious gap which we notice, and until this gap exists, we shall be lagging behind in global competitiveness. My supplementary has two components; (a) What is the reason for this low proportion of export? (b) Does the Government propose to reduce contract farming for increasing export in agriculture?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Sir, the Government has introduced contract farming. In fact, we have requested all the State Governments that they should change their APMC Act, and they should encourage contract farming. Some of the States like Punjab have already taken initiative in contract farming. I think, the other States also have started taking interest in the idea of contract farming, and this will, definitely grow. The second important point is, it is true that we are quite surplus in many areas. For example, we are surplus in milk production. In wheat, we are No.2 in the world;

again, in vegetables, we are No.2 in the world. Also, in some of the horticulture items like banana, we are the largest producer of banana. We are the largest producess in certain other items. But there are some other issues; for instance, though we are the largest producer of milk in the whole world, but if we study and compare our per lactation milk with any other country, our position is quite disturbing. That is why unless and until we improve our per hectare yield, we will not be able to become competitive. Today that is a serious problem which the Indian agriculture is facing. And, unless and until there is a substantial investment in the agriculture sector, —this sector is lacking in investment—we will not be able to compete internationally. That is why our total approach is to provide more money for irrigation purpose, more money for other facilities, try and develop more infrastructure for agriculture marketing and provide facilities in such a fashion where the Indian agricultural producers will be able to export, and the Indian farmers can become a global player.

श्री विजय जे॰ दर्डा : धन्यवाद, महोदय आज हमारे देश में कृषि तीन विभागों में बंटी हुई है - एक वह जो सघन है, दूसरे जिनको कैनाल और पानी की पूरी व्यवस्था है और तीसरे जो ड्राई लैंड पर काम करते हैं। महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से कृषि मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि कृषि मंत्रालय ने कई तकनीक का विकास करने के साथ विदेशी तकनीक का कृषि क्षेत्र में हस्तांतरण करने के लिए अब तक कितनी विदेशी संस्थाओं के साथ एम0ओ0यू0 साइन की है और विशेषकर बंजर जमीन को उपजाऊ बनाने के लिए कौन-कौन सी तकनीक का प्रस्ताव आपके सामने है?

श्री शरद पवार : महोदय, अन्य देशों के साथ हमने क्या किया है, यह डिटेल्ड इंफॉर्मेशन मुझे कलैक्ट करनी पड़ेगी। यह बात सच है कि कई देशों के साथ हमारे एम0ओ0यू0 साइन हुए हैं और कई देशों को हम मदद करते हैं। दुनिया के कई अंडर-डवलेप्ड कंट्रीज और डवेलपिंग कंट्रीज को कृषि क्षेत्र में सहयोग देने व सलाह देने की टैक्नॉलोजी के फैलाव का काम भारत के माध्यम से होता हैं। नई टैक्नालोजी लाने के बाद इस बारे में कुछ डवलप्ड कंट्रीज के साथ थोड़ी-बहुत बातचीत हुई है और खास तौर पर जैसे मैंने पहले कहा यूनाइटेड स्टेट्स ऑफ अमेरिका के साथ बातचीत हुई है। उनके साथ थोड़ा-बहुत एग्रीमैंट हुआ है और इजराइल के साथ बात चालू हैं। जहां तक वेस्ट लेंड की बात है, वेस्ट लैंड के लिए under rural development, there is a special programme to see how to bring wasteland under cultivation.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Sir, there is a peculiar discontent which is displayed in Indian agriculture today. On the one hand, as the reply States, most of the agriculture is for commercial purpose. At the same time, one finds that per capita availability of foodgrains is actually coming down. Now questions are coming up as to whether exports should go up and all

that. But for this, we should address the question of food security. Now, what important measures is the Agriculture Ministry taking in this regard?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Sir, we will not compromise on the question of food security. We are giving top-most priority for food security and, that is why, our continuous efforts are to improve the per hectare yield; our continuous efforts are to improve our procurements and make available foodgrains enough to all the States, and we are exactly working on it.

DR. FAROOQ ABDULLAH: Sir, recently, some people from Aghanistan had visited Ladakh to study the high altitude agricultural development that has taken place there. I would like to know from the Agricultural Minister whether he would like to give some more support to the Agricultural University of Jammu and Kashmir to develop further in that high altitude agricultural sector.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Certainly. We will be happy to do that. Let the proposal come from the State Goverment and the University and we will give directions to the Indian Council of Agricultural Research that they should pay special attention to an area like Ladakh.

SHRIMATI S.G.INDIRA: Sir, we are talking of agriculture becoming a knowledge-based industry. But the real fact is that Indian farmers are not even aware of the schemes being implemented by the Government of India. For example, a survey recently conducted brought out the fact that 91 per cent of Indian farmers do not even know what the Minimum Support Price is and where they have to sell their produce. So, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether he would come forward in this regard, and whether the Ministry would give financial assistance to the State Governments to spread awareness amongst the farmers.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Well, we should not forget one thing that Agriculture is a State Subject. That is why these types of issues have to be essentially resolved by respective State Goverments. Of course, I have myself seen that particular report which says that a sizeable section of the farming community does not know what is meant by MSP. I have decided to write to all the State Agriculture Ministers to bring to their notice that this type of information has come to us and that they should take steps so that farmers become aware of the MSP and a number of other schemes.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Sir, it is now realised that what we need in this country is a second Green Revolution. But I would like the hon. Minister to let us know whether special attention will be paid to horticulture and floriculture. Our capacity for horticulture is so great that we can improve vastly the living standards of people living in the mountain areas particularly. In floriculture also, we can export orchids, we can export roses and other flowers. I believe this area has not received adequate attention. Will the hon. Minister assure us that in the new programmes, he will give top priority to horticulture and floriculture?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: I entirely agree with hon. Member. It was true that enough steps had not been taken for development of horticulture in our country. But, last year, we gave approval to a new programme known as the 'Horticulture Mission'. An amount of Rs.2,300 crores has been provided for this particular programme and, practically, each and every State has been covered by this 'Horticulture Mission'. There is a separate programme for the North-East, Jammu and Kashmir and Uttaranchal in the area of horticulture. We provide up to 60 per cent subsidy to the farmers in the horticulture sector. I must say that there is tremendous response from various States.

Regarding floriculture, special programmes have been taken up for cultivation of green-house and normal crops.

M.S. Swaminathan Committee

*247. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Committee headed by the scientist Prof. M.S. Swaminathan has been set up to recommend steps to be taken along the Indian coastline in view of the Tsunami disaster last year;

(b) whether it is a proposed to draw a vulnerability line along the coast and amend the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) along this proposed line;

(c) whether it is proposed that new construction is to be allowed only beyond 1500 mts. from the coast; and

(d) whether Government have taken into account its impact on beach tourism and hotel locations if construction is banned upto one and a half kms. from the shore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The Central Government constituted an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. M.S. Swaminathan in July, 2004 to review the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 1991, in the light of findings and recommendations of all previous Committees, judicial pronouncements, representations of various stakeholders and suggest suitable amendments, if necessary to make the regulatory framework consistent with well established scientific principles of Coastal Zone Management. During the course of its functioning, the Committee also examined the issues relating to the Tsunami, that hit the eastern coast of India in December, 2004.

(b) One of the major recommendatiosn of Prof. M.S. Swaminathan's Committee Report relates to demarcation of a vulnerability line along the coastal areas based on seven parameters namely elevation, geology, geomorphology, sea level trends, horizontal shore level displacement (erosion/accretion), tidal ranges and wave heights. The Ministry has broadly accepted the recommendations including demarcation of the vulnerability line for implementation.

(c) No, Sir. Prof. M.S. Swaminathan Committee has not made any such recommendation.

(d) Does not arise.

DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Sir, Government's reply does not clarify many of the issues that have been raised. This has not been clarified as to what is the purpose of the 'vulnerability line' that has been recommended by the M.S. Swaminathan Copmmittee and which, as the hon. Minister says in his reply, has been broadly accepted by the Government. This is my first supplementary. What is the purpose of drawing up this 'vulnerability line'?

SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA: Sir, I have stated in my reply that his Committee was appointed to review the existing Notification issued in 1991. The purpose of appointing the Committee was to establish scientific principles of coastal zone management. The Committee has recommended that the vulnerability line should be demarcated on seven parameters.

DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Sir, my second supplementary is followed from this reply. The reply of the hon. Minister still does not clarify as to what is the purpose of drawing the vulnerability line if it has no implication on the Coastal Regulation Zone. So, the question is, will the Coastal Regulation Zone be modified in accordance with the vulnerability line that has been proposed? And, if so, have the State Governments been consulted in the matter of drawing the vulnerability line because many State Governments have expressed concern that this will have an adverse impact on the tourism industry?

SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA: Sir, the purpose of drawing the vulnerability line is to define the Coastal Regulation Zone on a scientific basis. I have already stated that. As far as demarcating the vulnerability line is concerned, the Ministry has given this work to the various organisations, such as, the Survey of India, Dehradun; Earth Science Studies, Trivandrum; Space Application Centre, Admedabad; and the Department of Ocean Development, Chennai. Let the vulnerability line be decided. We have taken up four projects, and we are expecting their reports by January. Then, we will decide what is to be done.

Increase in prices of pulses

*248. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that the rates of pulses are going to be high this year;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have taken any remedial action to cope up with this problem?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The Wholesale Prices of Pulses as measured by the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) (Base 1993-94 = 100) have been fluctuating during the last one year. The WPI of Pulses is as follows:—

Wholesale Prices Index for Pulses (Base: 1993-94 = 100)

Months	WP Index	% Change over preceding Months
October-04	179.9	—
November, 04	177.9	-1.11
December, 04	176.5	-0.79
January, 05	173.9	-1.47
February, 05	170.6	-1.90
March, 05	168.8	-1.06
April, 05	172.4	2.13
May, 05	177.0	2.67
June, 05	180.4	1.92
July, 05	187.5	3.94
August, 05	189.2	0.91
September, 05	188.8	-0.21
October, 05	191.1	1.22

Note: The Wholesale Prices Indices for the Month of September & October 2005 are provisional.

(c) Production of pulses in Kharif 2005 is estimated to be 4.98 million tons as against 4.95 million tons in Kharif 2004. The sowing of pulses in the current Rabi season is progressing well and total coverage is expected to be normal. For increasing the production of pulses in Rabi 2005-06 efforts have been made to increase the availability of quality seds. Further, a large number of seed minikits have also been distributed to the farmers. A Centrally Sponsored Integrated Scheme of Pulses, Oil Seeds, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM) is under implementation to increase productivity and production of pulses. Inspite of increase in production of pulses in the country, there has been a gap between domestic demand and production necessitating imports. In case the domestic production of pulses remains inadequate, import of pulses is resorted to ensure price stability and adequate availability of pulses to consumers.

श्री तारिक अनवर: उपसभापति महोदय, वैसे तो मेरे प्रश्न का जवाब मंत्री महोदय ने बहुत विस्तार से दिया है और एक बात हम सब लोग जानते हैं कि हमारे देश में जो खरीफ की फसल है, उसमें दाल का कितना महत्व है, क्योंकि अकसर हम लोग कहा करते हैं कि दाल रोटी खाएंगे, प्रभु के गुण गाएंगे, लेकिन अगर दाल ही महंगी होने लगे, तो यह चिंता का विषय हो जाता है। मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहूंगा, जो मेरा पहला प्रश्न है, कि हमारे देश में जो पलसेस का कंजम्पशन है, उससे प्रोडक्शन ज्यादा है या कम है? अगर ज्यादा है, तो क्या उसकी जानकारी मंत्री महोदय देंगे? दूसरा, क्या हमारे देश से पलसेस का एक्सपोर्ट भी हो रहा है? अगर हो रहा है, तो उसका क्या कारण है? जबकि हमारे देश में इसकी कमी है, फिर हम यह एक्सपोर्ट क्यों कर रहे हैं?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Sir, the requirement of the country of pulses is somewhat near to 17 million tonnes, that is the demand; and the actual production of the last three years is somewhat near to 15 million tonnes. So, there is a gap of 2 million tonnes between demand and production. That is the reason why every year we import pulses from other countries. There is no export of pulses from India to other countries.

श्री तारिक अनवर: उपसभापति जी, मंत्री महोदय ने बताया कि कीमत का संतुलन बनाए रखने के लिए इम्पोर्ट भी किया जा सकता है या इम्पोर्ट करने की योजना भी है। हम यह जानना चाहेंगे कि आप जो इम्पोर्ट करेंगे, उससे इनकी कीमत, जो हमारे देश में कीमत है, उससे ज्यादा होगी या उसके बराबर होगी?

श्री शरद पवार: उपसभापति महोदय, एक तो इम्पोर्ट ओ॰ जी॰ एल॰ पर होता है, जो सरकार इम्पोर्ट करती है, इसमें इम्पोर्ट तय करती है, मगर इंटरनेशनल प्राइस, इस देश में जो प्राइस है, उससे कम है।

श्री सीताराम येचुरी: धन्यवाद, उपसभापति जी। मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री महोदय, से जानना चाहूंगा कि पलसेस की जो कंजम्पशन है, वह हमारे देश की जनता के न्यूट्रीशन के लिए बहुत ही अनिवार्य है, मगर आज यह पलसेस की कंजम्पशन साल-दर-साल पर कैपिटा घटती जा रही है। इसका घटना जो है, बड़ा चिंता का सवाल है। आप ही के आंकड़ों के अनुसार अप्रैल, 2005 से अगर आप अक्तूबर तक देखें, तो लगातार दाम बढ़ रहे हैं।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Revival of Gorakhpur and Sindri Fertilizer Units

*241. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering the revival of the Gorakhpur and Sindri units of the Fertilizer Corporation of India, by setting up gas-based brownfield fertilizer plants at the existing sites;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal;

(c) whether it is also a fact that GAIL has agreed to supply gas to the units by 2010; and

(d) by when the units are scheduled to be operational?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The proposal envisages setting up of brownfield gas based fertilizer plants at the existing sites of Gorakhpur and Sindri units of Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd.

(c) GAIL has indicated that they have drawn up a plan which may enable supply of natural gas/LNG for revival of these two units.

(d) The revival of these units will depend on their techno-economic viability.

CBI raids in hospitals

*244. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has conducted raids on certain hospitals in Delhi and other cities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for conducting raids on these hospitals;

(d) the incriminating documents seized from these concerned hospitals;

(e) whether any arrests have, so far, been made;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the departmental action so far taken or proposed to be taken against the concerned officers of these hospitals?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) to (g) Yes, Sir. Recently CBI has registered two cases No. RC 4(A)/2005-ACU-IX and RC. 5(A)/2005-ACU-IX. RC 4(A)/2004-ACU-IX is relating to conspiracy in pursuance of irregularly granting recognition to Homeopathy Medical Colleges as well as granting increase in seats both in Graduation and Post-Graduation level. RC 5(A)/2005-ACU-IX is relating to allegation that the accused persons had entered into a criminal conspiracy with a common object to cheat Government and thereby caused wrongful gain to M/s Nestor Pharmaceuticals, New Delhi, by awarding contract worth Rs. 7.50 Crores (Approximate) for supply of laparoscopes for use in various Government Hospitals in the year 2001-02.

In these cases, searches have been conducted by CBI at (i) Bakson Homeopathic Medical College & Hospital, NOIDA, (ii) Solan Homeopathic Medical College & Hospital, Chamba Ghat, Solan (HP), (iii) GDM Homeopathic Medical College & Hospital, Patna, and (iv) Office Premises of the Consultant & Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi. Searches were conducted as a part of investigation to collect evidences in these cases. As the cases are under investigation, the details of recoveries/seizures made during the searches are not made available by CBI. No arrests have been made by the CBI. As these cases are still under investigation, no departmental action has been initiated.

Polluted lakes in Andhra Pradesh

*249. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had surveyed the polluted lakes in the country during the last one year especially in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details of such surveys made in each district;

(c) the remedial steps taken and to be taken by Government in this regard;

(d) whether Government are facing financial crunch to clean the polluted lakes;

(e) if so, the amount allocated so far; and

(f) the amount to be allocated during the coming year to clear the lakes from pollution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (f) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The Government of India has not conducted any survey but a study was carried out for identification of polluted lakes in the country in the year 2003. The study identified 62 lakes, out of which 2 lakes namely, Osman Sagar at Hyderabad and Pulicat at Nellore were in respect of Andhra Pradesh. This list was sent to all States and the State Governments were requested to prioritise the lakes for conservation in their State.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has prioritised three lakes which are as follows:—

(i) Banjara Lake, Hyderabad
(ii) Mir Alam Lake, Hyderabad
(iii) Pulicat Lake, Nellore District

The State Government of Andhra Pradesh through the Hyderabad Urban Development authority (HUDA) have taken up the survey of water quality of 87 lakes in the Hyderabad Development Area covering the districts of Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy and partially Medak. In addition, four lakes have been taken up for study by the Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board for remediation.

(c) The Government of India has already sanctioned the project for cleaning and rejuvenation of Banjara lake at Hyderabad at a cost of Rs. 2.75 crore in February 2005. The project components include bio-remediation, diversion of sewage and construction of Sewage Treatment Plant and lake front development etc. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has not submitted any proposal in respect of Mir Alam and Pulicat Lakes.

(d) to (f) An allocation of Rs. 220 crore was originaly made for National Lake Conservation Plan (NLCP) during the Tenth Plan period, out of which

Rs. 103 crore have been released for implementation of conservation works in 37 lakes. Allocation of fund during the coming year shall be subject to the progress of ongoing projects, utilization of funds released and new proposals to be submitted by the State Governments.

Cancer patients in the country

†*250. SHRI LAXMINARYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERITILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of cancer patients is increasing in the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that cancer medicines are costly and out of reach of common man; and

(c) the measures Government would take to provide these medicines to the common man on reasonable rates?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN):(a) to (c) As per the information available through Population Based Cancer Registry functioning under the National Cancer Registry Programme of Indian Council of Medical Reasearch, it has been estimated that about 7-9 lakhs new cancer cases are detected every year in India. At any given point of time, there are 20-25 lakhs cancer patients in the country. This data does not indicate any significant increase in the overall incidence rate of cancer.

The medicines which have been utilized for treatment of cancer are generally costly and therefore, they are normally out of reach of a common Indian cancer patients. However, it is noted that out of these drugs, only Chemotherapy drugs are generally expensive, while the antibiotics, anti emetics, vitamins, pain killers are not so expensive.

The Government had constituted a Task Force under the Chairmanship of Dr. Pronab Sen, Principal Adviser, Planning Commission to explore options other than price control to make available life saving drugs at reasonable prices. The Task Force has recommended access arrangements in case of low volume high prices drugs, which include most of the cancer drugs. The Task Force has recommended that the Government

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

should consider entering into access arrangement with the concerned manufacturers whereby a lower priced medicine can be made available to the common man. Further it was recommended that the cancer drugs should be completely exempted from the levy of the custom duty, excise duty, octroi and other levies, if any. The Task Force also recommended the mechanism for making available the lifesaving medicines free of cost to BPL families.

Further, the Government had earlier constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (PI) was constituted to examine the span of price control (including trade margin) had also recommended special schemes for people below poverty line, introduction of Rajasthan Model of Life Line Fluid Stores (hospital pharmacy stores run by Medicare Societies) for bulk purchase of drugs directly from manufacturer and selling them at reduced prices, which will also assist in reducing the cost of drugs to the common man.

Health being a State subject it is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments to provide treatment to the cancer patients. The Central Government is supplementing the efforts of the State Governments by providing financial assistance for setting up of radiotherapy units in medical colleges/hospitals for providing treatment facilities and recurring grants to most to the recognized regional cancer centers in States for procurement of equipment and for research. The Central Government has set up a National Illness Assistance Fund under Department of Health for providing assistance to poor families for major life threatening diseases. The Central Government is also contributing to the State Illness Assistance Funds in various States for providing treatment to the needy and poor patients under the Rashtriya Aarogya Nidhi. Some of the anti cancer drugs are provided free in the Government institutions. Besides the Central Government employees are covered under CGHS for the purchases of drugs required.

Based on the recommendations of the Task Force and the Committee constituted by this Department, the Government is examining the possibility of introducing a health insurance scheme for BPL families, under which medicines for all diseases including cancer would be provided free of cost (up to a specified amount) to these families. A public- private partnership programme for reducing the cost of anti-cancer medicine is contemplated with the pharma industry and cancer hospitals.

Use of staple pins in packaging of edible items

†*251. SHRI VASANT CHAVAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the use of staple pins in packaging of edible items is appropriate;

(b) if not, whether Government are giving it a serious thought; and

(c) whether Government would bring an amendment in the law to ban this?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) to (c) The matter relating to ban on the use of staple pins in packaging of edible items was examined by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on the request of Department of Health, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. The ICMR opined that use of staple pins in packaging of food products is a common practice and the sick of swallowing the pin along with the food is very minimal.

The Central Committee for Food Standards (CCFS), a statutory committee under the PFA Act, 1954, in its meeting held in June, 1990, considered the opinion of ICMR and recommended that the State Governments may educate the traders to discourage such practices. Accordingly, the State Governments were requested to create awareness in this regard and discourage the use of staple pins for packing edible items.

NAFED loans

*252. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that NAFED has disbursed loan of several crores of rupees to a few firms and if so, the details thereof including the amount of loans given to each firms and its grounds;

(b) whether it is also a fact that NAFED had given bank guarantee or extended loans to these firms without any collateral, moveable or immoveable sureties; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR):

New medicine for malaria

*253. SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have invented a new medicine based on plants to prevent malaria;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have completed the trial process of the said medicine and by when this medicine would be available to the common man?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) to (c) The new medicine derived from traditional Chinese herbal preparation-Quinghaosu (Artemisinin, from the herb Artemisia annua and its derivatives-Artemther, Arteether and Artesunate) has been approved for use under the National Malaria Drug Policy of the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme.

Artemisinin derivatives are to be used to P.falciparum severe and complicated malaria cases and for Pf malaria cases not responding to conventional anti-malaria drugs i.e. chloroquine. The drug is available under the programme for treatment of P.falciparum malaria resistant to anti-malaria drug chloroquine.

Before introducing the drug in the programme, it has undergone clinical trials and has been approved by the Drug Controller General of India for use.

Disease Surveillance Labs

*254. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Centres for Disease Control, United States, will help India in setting up disease surveillance labs to track disease out-breaks in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the National Drug Authority is also going to be set up to regulate standards for the manufacture, supply, pricing, licensing and use of medicines in India;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) what are the other agreements that India agreed to enter with CUS, United States, during his recent visit to that country?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) to (e) The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and the Department of Health and Human Services, United States of America, have signed a joint statement on 7th June, 2005, to expand Indo-US cooperation on emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases and disease surveillance. The collaboration will focus on collaborative applied research relating to emerging infectious diseases, strengthening disease surveillance, prevention and control and effective outbreak investigation and response. The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will be the lead agencies in United States. The National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Indian Council of Medical Research will be the lead agencies in India.

A proposal for setting up of an autonomous Central Drug Authority of India (CDAI) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is under active consideration of the Government. The proposed National Drug Authority will subsume the functions of the existing organization for drug regulation, i.e. the Central Drug Standards and Control Organization (CDSCO) as well as address new emerging fields pertaining to bio-technology products, medical devices, diagnostics, new drugs and clinical trials and pharmacovigilance. In addition, it is also proposed to entrust the Drug Authority to undertake the functions of grant of drug manufacturing licenses centrally in a phased manner. However, the Authority will not be entrusted with regulation of drug pricing which is a subject of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers and the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority. The Drug Authority will be financially autonomous with provision for it to retain fees realized by it on various counts.

Apart from the Joint Statement on Cooperation in emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases and surveillance, no other agreements were entered into during the recent visit of the Minister for Health and Family Welfare to USA.

Institute for checking quality of wheat and rice

†*255. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an Institute has been entrusted with the responsibility of testing the quality of wheat and rice lying in the stores of Food Corporation of India;

(b) if so, the name of the institute and the reasons for its selection; and

(c) the amount fixed for the institute for carrying on the responsibility and whether the above institute has been selected from a panel of institutes?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Shareholding pattern of VSP

*256. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the shareholding of Government in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant;

(b) the other investments or stakes in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant by Government;

(c) whether there is any proposal to transfer the stake of the Central Government to the State Government; and

(d) the details of the present value of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The shareholding of the Government in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant is as under

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

		(Rs. Crores)
(i)	Equity share capital	Rs. 4,889.95
(ii)	7% Non-cumulative redeemable preference share capital	Rs. 2,937.47
		Rs. 7,827.42

(b) Apart from share capital, Government has no other investments in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) No specific exercise has been made to assess the present value of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant. However, as per the audited accounts, the net worth of the Company as on 31st March 2005, is Rs. 6,878.31 crores.

Procurement of materials by South East Central Railway

†*257. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the zonal headquarters of South-East Central Railway located at Bilaspur has been fully empowered to procure various materials to be used in the said zone;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor and by when such powers will be delegated;

(c) whether any preference will be given to the State industries in the procurement of various materials to be used in this Zone, and initiative will be taken by the Railways for setting up the industry producing such materials in case such industries are not in existence at present; and

(d) whether this zone has approached the Government of Chhattisgarh in this regard, if so, when and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir. The General Manager of South-East Railway, Bilaspur has been delegated financial powers up to Rs. 15 crore for procurement of stores on par with the General Managers of other Zonal Railways. When the procurement value of stores exceeds Rs. 15 crore, purchases are approved by the Railway Board/Minister of State for Railways/Minister of Railways.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) The powers already delegated are considered adequate.

(c) The Ministry of Railways follows the guidelines of the purchase policy of the Government of India for procurement of materials. Purchase preference is given to the Central Public Sector Enterprises as per purchase policy of Government of India. Further, Ministry of Railways currently has no plans for setting up of industries for sourcing of materials required by Railways.

(d) Does not arise.

PM's Task Force on Drug Prices

*258. DR. KARAN SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether PM's Task Force on making the medicines affordable has asked Government to cut by half the 16 per cent excise duty levied on retail price of medicines;

(b) whether the excise duty is currently levied at 60 per cent of retail price;

(c) whether the final report submitted by the Task Force also states that ceiling prices should be fixed for 314 essential ingredients taken from a list of 354 prepared by the Health Ministry; and

(d) whether drugs with 70 per cent market share would be de-branded?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (d) A Task Force under the Chairmanship of Dr. Pronab Sen, Principal Adviser, Planning Commission was constituted to explore options other than price control to make available life saving drugs at reasonable prices. The Task Force has submitted its report to the Government on the 20th September, 2005. The Task Force has recommended in its final report that the excise duty on all pharmaceutical products should be reduced from 16 to 8 per cent.

Vide notification No. 2/2005-Central Excise (N.T.) dated 7.1.2005 of Department of Revenue read with notification No. 4/2005-Central Excise (N.T.) dated 23.2.2005, the Central Excise Duty is being levied on 60% of the retail price of medicines.

The Task Force has recommended the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) should form the basis of drugs to be considered for intensive price monitoring, ceiling prices and imposing price control, if any. To initiate this process, the Government should announce the ceiling price of the drugs contained in NLEM (other than the drugs procured by hospitals directly and which an individual does not have to purchase from the market) on the basis of weighted average of the top three brands based on value.

At present, the National List of Essential Medicines, 2002 consists of 354 essential items. Out of which approximately 40 items are being procured by the hospitals directly and, therefore, as per the Task Force recommendations the ceiling price proposal is not applicable on them. This results into the Government fixing the ceiling price of 314 essential ingredients out of the list of 354 prepared by the Health Ministry as per NLEM 2003. However, the Government is examining the recommendations of the Task Force in consultation with various stakeholders. Based on this discussion the new Pharmaceutical Policy is likely to be announced shortly.

Further, for promotion of generics and in order to bring an effective consumer choice, the Task Force has discussed the issue of "Establishing the role of true generics through a process of compulsory de-branding of selected drugs". It was suggested that de-branding should be considered only for prescription drugs (Schedule H of Drugs and Cosmetics Rules) and not for non-prescription drugs. It was suggested that the idea is to influence Doctor's prescription behaviour so that the patient can source the lowest price version in the market. Moreover, it was further suggested that this measure should be considered primarily in cases where there is evidence of clear market dominance, such as when 70% or more of the sale of the medicines concerned is accounted by a single company. However, the Government is examining the recommendations made in the Task Force Report with various stakeholders and is likely to announce the new Pharmaceutical Policy shortly.

Rural Healthcare and Education

*259. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any initiatives for improvement in rural healthcare and education in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the achievements made thereon;

(c) whether it is a fact that the country is still lagging behind countries like China in development of rural healthcare and education; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the concrete steps proposed to be initiated thereon by Government?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) to (d) The Human Development Report 2005, published by the UNDP, places India at rank 127 in Human Development (HDI) with 0.61 Education Index while China is placed at rank 85 in HDI Rank with 0.84 Education Index.

Keeping in view the inadequate health delivery system in the country, poor health infrastructure and low investment in health, the Government has launched National Rural Health Mission on 12.4.2005 in the entire country with special focus in 18 States which have weak public health indictors and/or weak infrastructure. The main goals of the NRHM are to provide accessible, affordable and accountable primary health care system. Key-strategies of the Mission are:

- Involvement and leadership of PRIs for the Health Sector.
- Creation of a cadre of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) in 2.5 lakh villages in four years in a phased manner.
- Creation of village health team and preparation of village health plan.
- Strengthening sub-centres with United Fund of Rs. 10,000/- per annum.
- Codification of Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS).
- Raising 2000+CHCs to the level of IPHS.

- 100% PHCs for 24 hours referral services.
- Provision of 2nd doctor (AYUSH) at PHC.
- Supply of essential drugs, both allopathic and AYUSH to Sub-Centres.

The first year of the Mission is a preparatory period during which institutional mechanism to operationalise the mission are being set.

A Task Force on Medical Education under NRHM has been constituted to give their recommendations on the following:

(i) to make rural service attractive for doctors;

(ii) To promote medical colleges in the rural and other underserved areas;

(iii) To promote medical colleges in rural areas, the Task Group would *recommend whether a joint venture could be permitted whereby* the Government hospital at district level is allowed to be used for teaching purposes subject to the condition that the hospital continues to be run by the Government while recurring expenditure is borne by the private body; and

(iv) Modalities of strengthening the infrastructure of existing Government medical colleges particularly in the EAG and North Eastern States.

Regarding universalization of elementary education in the country and to improve literacy levels among the non-literates, the Government is implementing several schemes including Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA), Mid-day-Meal Scheme etc. Separate National Literacy Mission has been set up to make concerted efforts at planning and implementation level to achieve the objectives of imparting functional literacy to the non-literates with special emphasis on low female literacy districts and other districts having lower literacy rates. Schemes are being implemented in the Secondary and Higher/Technical Education with the aim or providing access to the quality education and develop human capital to meet the present and future needs.

Initiatives undertaken to improve the education in the country are:

- Constitution of India has been amended according to which " the State shall provide Free and Compulsory Education to all the

children of the age 6-14 years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine".

- To increase the public expenditure on education in a phased manner to reach 6% of GDP with 7% growth rate. Government had imposed 2% Education Cess from 2004 on all direct taxes to fund basis quality education.
- Central Advisory Board on Education was reconstitued in August, 2004 and National Curriculum Framework for school education had been revised.
- Development of primary health care infrastructure for the urban slum areas.

Iron ore produced in India

*260. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of total deposits of 'iron ore' available in India;

(b) whether 'iron ore' is exported from India;

(c) if so, the quantum of 'iron ore' exported during the last three years;

(d) if this pace of export countinues, after how many years 'iron ore' will be exhausted;

(e) whether any concern has been expressed by some on this export; and

(f) whether Government propose to restrict this export?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The deposits of iron ore based on United Nations Framework Classification (UNFC) as on 1.4.2000 is as mentioned below:

(Unit: '000 tonnes)

Grade	Resource as on 1.4.2000
Haematite	11,425,788
Magnetite	10,682,207
Total	22,107,995

Source: Indian Bureau of Mines, Nagpur

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The quantum of 'iron ore' exported during the last three years is as follows:

(Qty: Million tonnes)

Year	Exports of iron ore
2002-03	48.02
2003-04	62.57
2004-05(p)	78.14

Source:- MMTC

P: provisional figures

(d) The life of iron ore reserves in India will be influenced by a number of factors such as rate of growth in mining activity; growth in demand for iron ore (which will depend on the growth of the steel industry); level and growth of exploration and prospecting activities; discovery of new reserves in new areas and in existing mines and the future approach towards inclusion of iron ore reserves with lower iron content. It is thus difficult to provide a firm estimate of the life of iron ore reserves. Ministry of Mines has, however, based on expected demand in 2020 for iron ore and the current reserves, estimated that the present reserves should suffice for 125 years.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) The present Foreign Trade Policy, for the period 2004-09, already prescribes canalization through Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation Limited (MMTC) of export of iron ore of +64% Fe content from all sectors except ore of Goan and Redi origin. Besides, quantitative ceilings on export of high grade iron ore the Bailadila sector have also been prescribed.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Central Tobacco Research Institute

1802. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the role of the Central Tobacco Research Institute;

(b) whether it is a fact that very little positive, constructive and useful research has come out of the CTRI in the last three years;

(c) the steps proposed to energise this body in the interest of the farmers; and

(d) the details of measures proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The Central Tobacco Research Institute (CRTI) is conducting basic, applied, strategic and anticipatory research on different types of tabacco grown under varied agro-ecological situations in the country.

(b) No, Sir. The CRTI has developed ten new varieties and crop production and portection technologies such as integrated nutrient management, irrigation water management, modified barn for reducing cost of curing, integrated pest management, etc. during the last three years.

(c) and (d) Research programmes of CRTI have been reoriented to provide thrust on alternative use of tobacco, reduction of harmful substances like Tar, TSNA & pesticide residues, viable tobacco based cropping systems, organic farming , etc.. Needbased budget provisions have been made to conduct research on above programmes.

Venture capital fund

1803. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved Rs. 48 crores venture capital fund for agri-sector business;

(b) if so, whether this venture capital is accepted to provide much needed relief to farmers for whom one of the biggest hurdles has been lack of acess to easy credit;

(c) whether, in a recent National Sample Survey Organisation only 15 per cent farmers said that they had availed of any loan;

(d) whether, with this venture capital, they would be able to obtain bigger loans from banks and its processing will be easier; and

(e) if so, to what extent this has helped the farmers and the total funds, so far, provided to the farmers from this fund?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Agriculture has implemented a new Central Sector Scheme with effect from July, 2005 to provide venture capital assistance to agri-business projects and to assist producer's group in the preparation of detailed reports for such projects. The main abjective of the Scheme is to catalyze private investment in setting up of agri-business projects and threby providing assured markets to producers for increasing rural income and employment. The scheme has been approved with an outaly of Rs.48 crores during remaining period of Tenth Plan. The scheme is implemented by the Small Farmers' Agri-business Consortium (SFAC), an autonomous organization under this Ministry. Venture capital assistance is provided for those projects that encourage the farmers to diversify into high value crops and provide them with assured market and increased farm income. Assistance provided under the scheme lowers the business risk to the agri entrepreneurs and enhances the financial viability of the projects for the banks.

(c) To study the state of the Indian Farmers, National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) conducted a countrywide survey during January to December, 2003. The survey report on "Indebtedness of Farmer Households" released by NSSO in the month of May, 2005 deals with the indebtedness among farmer households according to source or purpose of loan and their distribution over different social and economic parameters such as social groups, source of income, size-class of land possessed etc. The survey report says that at all India level, 48.6% of the formers house holds were reported to be indebted *i.e.* having a liability in cash or kind with value Rs.300 or more at the time of transaction.

(d) and (e) For an effective implementation of agri-business projects, a Memorandum of Understading (MoU) has been signed between SFAC and several important banks namely Oriental Bank of Commerce, UCO Bank, Bank of Baroda, Punjab National Bank, Central Bank of India, Allahabad Bank, Canara Bank, Vijaya Bank, Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited, Bank of Maharshtra and Syndicate Bank, SFCA has so far approved Venture Capital Assistance to 24 Agri-Business Projects involving a cost of Rs. 93.07 crore. These projects will help in direct linking of about 25000 farmers to assured market for their produce.

Loan availability to agriculture sector

†1804. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a loan worth Rs. 7,36,570 crores would be required to be made available by the end of Tenth Five Year Plan in the agriculture sector of the country;

(b) if not, the facts thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that by the end of 19th August, 2005, the loan worth Rs. 1,27,621 crores was required to be made available in this sector; and

(d) if not, the facts thereof and the loan availability required to be increased annually during the remaining years of the Plan in order to achieve the loan target by the end of the Plan?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Working Group on Agricultural Credit, Cooperation and Crop Insurance for the Tenth Five Year Plan constituted by the Planning Commission has estimated the requirement of credit for agriculture and allied sectors during the Tenth Plan Period at Rs. 7,36,570 crores.

(c) Considering the need to enhance credit flow to agriculture, Government of India announced a credit package on 18th June 2004 which envisages doubling of flow of agriculture credit by ensuring a 30 per cent annual growth in the next three years. Accordingly, credit disbursement target for 2005-06 has been set at Rs. 1,42,000 crore.

(d) Besides achieving the annual growth rate of 30% in agricultural credit flow, an additional loan of about Rs. 1,48,000 crore would be required during the remaining part of the Tenth Plan Period *i.e.* 2005-06 and 2006-07 for achieving the requirement of Rs. 7,36,570 crore as given by the Working Group referred in reply to part (a) of the question.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Income of farmers

1805. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian farmers are getting today the same price for their produce which they had been getting 20 years ago as per reports of United Nationals Conference on Trade and Development;

(b) whether it is also a fact that income of farmers in various parts of the country has drastically fallen and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the remedial steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The report of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) "Agricultural Trade Policy in India—Challenges and Opportunities (July-2005)" states as follows:-

"Agricultural Commodity prices have fallen by some 50% in the last two decades; the net effect being a loss of annual export earnings to the tune of $ 60 billion a year for developing countries".

The above information is for developing countries and not India specific.

(b) The Index of Terms of Trade (ITT) for agriculture with base TE 1990-91 (TE-1990-91=100) was 106.6 in 1994-95 and declined to 102.6 in 2001-02. In 2002-03, the ITT increased to 103.6. As per the provisional figures, the ITT has declined to 102.5 in 2003-04.

(c) Several schemes and programmes have been initiated to improve the income of the farmers. The National Horticulture Mission launched in May, 2005, is designed to double the production of horticulture crops by 2011-12. Under this Mission, assistance is being provided for development of seeds and planting material through the public and the private sector. Under the Integrated scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM) subsidy is given for seed production and distribution. Under Mini Mission II of Technology Mission on Cotton also, assistance is provided for supply of breeder seed and production of foundation seeds. Similarly, under the scheme National Project on Organic Farming, financial support is given to farmers for setting up of fruits and vegetable wastes compost

unit, bio-fertilizer production and vermiculture hatcheries. Farmers also receive subsidy on purchase of various agricultural equipments, including hand tools, bullock drawn/power-driven implements, sprinkler and drip irrigation equipments, tractors, power tillers etc. Under the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS), small and marginal farmers receive subsidy to the extent of 10% of the premium, at present.

It is also worth mentioning here that in order to make the Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) scheme more beneficial to the farmers by catering to their investment credit requirements, the NABARD revised the KCC scheme in August, 2004 to cover term loans for agriculture and allied activities. Keeping in view the role of animal husbandry and fishery sectors in improving income levels of farmers, particularly for landless, small and marginal farmers, special attention is being paid to animal diseases control, livestock breed improvement and development, fodder development, dairy and poultry development, and fisheries development.

Cows and stray cattle

1806. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to mechanized farming in Punjab, male calves in large number have become useless and are roaming stray in Punjab;

(b) whether the Government of Punjab has sought permission from Government to export these stray cattle to the neighbouring States where bullocks are used for farming;

(c) whether the permission has been granted and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether the Government of Punjab have also sought permission from Government to export cows of cross breed to the neighbouring States and if so, the action taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (d) Due to mechanized farming in Punjab, the utility of male calves has dwindled. The Government of India has not received any request from Government of Punjab to grant permission to export the stray cattle including cows of cross breed to the neighbouring States.

Weather insurance scheme

1807. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that insurance scheme is applicable in the country to compensate the farmers when their crop is damaged due to bad weather;

(b) if so, the names of the States in the country wherein insurance scheme is applicable at present;

(c) the names of crops for which this insurance scheme is applicable; and

(d) the number of farmers in the country benefited by this insurance scheme during 2003-04, 2004-05 and first six months of 2005-06?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) is the major Insurance Scheme being implemented in the country. The scheme provides insurance cover against the crop losses suffered on account of natural calamities including bad weather conditions.

In addition to the NAIS, some private insurance companies are implementing weather based insurance schemes like rainfall insurance on limited scale.

(b) National Agricultural Insurance Scheme is being implemented by 23 States and 2 Union Territories (UTs). These States and UTs are—Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Orissa, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, West Bengal, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Pondicherry.

Varsha Bima (*i.e.* rainfall insurance) is being implemented in 10 States by Agriculture Insurance Company of India Ltd. (AIC). These States are Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh.

(c) The National Agriculture Insurance Scheme (NAIS) covers following broad groups of crops:

(i) Food crops (cereals, millets and pulses).

(ii) Oilseeds.

(iii) Annual commercial/horticultural crops.

Paddy, Cotton, Groundnut, Sunflower, Jowar, Maize, Tur, Bajra, Greengram, Soyabean, Ragi, and Blackgram crops are covered under the Varsha Bima 2005 Scheme of AIC.

(d) Details of number of farmers benefited under NAIS and Varsha Bima during the years 2003-04, 2004-05 and first six months of 2005-06 are given as under:

Sl. No.	Years	Farmers Benefited	
		NAIS	Varsha Bima
1.	2003-04	3777311	-
2.	2004-05	3097944	984
3.	2005-06	No claims have paid in the 1st six months.	364

Expansion of weather insurance

1808. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the estimated agriculture losses of nearly Rs. 2000 crores in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh and a complete eradication of farm income in the flood affected areas, have brought to light the need for an expansion of weather insurance in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether at present the insurance firms do not cover excess rainfall but cover only the deficient rainfall;

(d) if so, the measures taken by Government to extend the weather insurance to cover excess rainfall to benefit farmers; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Weather based insurance scheme *i.e.* Varsha Bima Yojana of Agriculture Insurance Company of India Ltd. (AIC) was implemented on pilot basis in four States including Andhra Pradesh during Kharif 2004. In Kharif 2005, the scheme has been implemented in 10 States including Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra covering more than 1.25 lakh farmers. In addition, some private insurance companies like ICICI-Lombard General Insurance Company, IFFCO-TOKYO General Insurance Company are also implementing weather based insurance particularly rain-fall insurance schemes on limited scale.

(c) to (e) Losses due to excess rain-fall are not covered at present under Varsha Bima Yojana. However, Joint Group constituted by the Government of India, to study the improvements required in the existing crop insurance schemes have recommended for evolving a farmer friendly weather based insurance scheme. The Government, at present, is in the process of consulting different stakeholders for the implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Group.

World Bank assistance to Himachal Pradesh for apple plantation

†1809. SHRI BASHISTHA NARAIN SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the assistance through World Bank provided by the Central Government to the Government of Himachal Pradesh during the last three years to help economically backward people and SCs to grow apple plantation;

(b) whether it is a fact that weaker sections of Rohadu and Chhargaon Tehsil of Shimla district have not benefited from it; and

(c) if so, whether the Central Government will ask the State Government to look into the matter?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India has not provided any assistance of World Bank to Government of Himachal Pradesh during last 3 years to grow Apple plantations.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) and (c) Does not arise. However, Government of India is implementing a FAO sponsored project namely, "Apple Production improvement Project" at a total cost of US$ 3,60,000 in the states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal since March, 2003. Under this project assistance has been provided to Government of Himachal Pradesh to strengthen and develop the capabilities of the Government to improve apple productivity and nursery sector, through selected technologies, expert advice, training and planting material. Under the project three potential districts of Himachal Pradesh for apple production namely Shimla, Kullu and Chamba are covered.

Approving Price Support Scheme of Kerala

1810. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal seeking price support scheme for cash crops from Kerala Government is pending for sanction;

(b) if so, the decision, if any, arrived at on the same and if so, the details thereof, and if not the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government of Kerala has sought the intervention of Government to include the perennial crops under the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme and if so, whether Government have taken any decision in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) No proposal for Government of Kerala seeking Price Support Scheme for cash crops is pending. On the request of State/UT Government, the Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture is implementing Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of agricultural and horticultural commodities generally perishable in nature and not covered under Price Support Scheme. During 2005-06 on the request of Government of Kerala, the Ministry of Agriculture implemented MIS for procurement of 5050 MT Black pepper at the Market Intervention Price of Rs. 7000/- per qtl. from 15.2.2005 to 15.4.2005.

(c) The State Government of Kerala has requested for coverage of perennial/horticultural crops like coconut, arecanut, cashewnut, cardamom, tea, coffee etc. under the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS). A Joint Group constituted by the Government to study the improvement

required in the existing Crop Insurance Scheme has given a number of suggestions including coverage of perennial/horticultural crops under a separate scheme. The report of this Group is under consideration of the Government.

Awareness about MSP

1811. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that 81 percent farmers do not know about the minimum support price;

(b) whether it is a fact that a good percentage of farmers are not aware of how to sell their produce under MSP; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government to create awareness among farmers in this respect?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) According to Situation Assessment Survey of Farmers carried out by National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) in its 59th Round (January-December, 2003), 71 per cent of farmers did not know or understand the concept of Minimum Support Price. Among the farmers surveyed, 10 per cent understood what Minimum Support Price meant but not of the procurement agency. Remaining 19 per cent not only understood the idea of Minimum Support Price but also knew the agency (if not its name, its location) to which they would sell their crop if its market price fell below the Minimum Support Price.

(c) To create awareness among farmers support is provided to the States in strengthening extension programmes through a number of schemes. The various schemes include: support to State Extension Programmes for Extension Reforms, Mass Media Support to Agriculture, Kisan Call Centres and Establishment of Agri-Clinic and Agri-Business Centres by Agriculture Graduates. Under the Central Sector Scheme on Mass Media Support to Agriculture Extension, agriculture related information and knowledge to the farming community is provided through 172 Narrow Casting Centres, 18 Regional Centres, 1 National Doordarshan Kendra and through 96 FM radio stations. Information on Minimum Support Prices of various commodities is being disseminated through these programmes to the farmers since September 2005 onwards.

Legislation for holding of agricultural land

1812. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the size of holding of agricultural land is decreasing day by day and becoming unviable to earn livelihood;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to bring any legislation to fix a minimum quantum of holding of agriculture so as to make farming a viable earning; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes, Sir. The average size of holding of agricultural land has decreased from 2.28 hectares in 1970-71 to 1.41 hectares in 1995-96.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Reforms in KVK System

1813. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have called for the reforms of the Krishi Vigyan Kendra System;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this direction, so far;

(c) whether Government propose to extent the services needed to evolve and make the system contemporary in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the KVKs are providing support to farmers to build their skills and confidence;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the details of action plans of KVKs like strategic crop planning, demonstrations, exposure visits, training, gender concerns, mass media schemes, kisan call centers and agri-clinics?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) A number of steps have been taken by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research to bring reforms of the Krishi Vigyan Kendra System. The steps are as follows:—

- Establishment of one KVK in all the rural districts of the country.
- Constitution of Scientific Advisory Committee for effective planning and management of the KVK activities.
- Instituting ICAR Award for outstanding KVK.
- Provision of Revolving Fund for instructional farm activities.
- Decentralized monitoring of KVK activities and release of funds.

(c) and (d) In order to extend the services needed and to make the KVK system contemporary, the Council has taken the following steps:

- Provisions of electronic connectivity to 200 KVKs during X Plan for availability of technology information to the farmers.
- Providing Soils and Water testing facilities to 326 KVKs during X Plan for increased input efficiency.
- Upgradation of knowledge and skills of women farmers.

(e) and (f) In order to provide support to the farmers to upgrade their knowledge and skills, during the last one year, 8.43 lakh farmers were trained by the KVKs on various aspects of crop production, crop protection, livestock production and management, fisheries, natural management, use of tools and implements and other related areas.

(g) The main extension system is operated by the State Governments. There is no proposal for strategic crop planning by the KVKs. During the last one year, the KVKs conducted 33,942 frontline demonstrations and a large number of training programmes benefiting 8.43 lakh farmers including 2.76 lakh women farmers. The KVKs also took up various extension activities through mass media like, publication of bulletins (63), extension literatures (1281), popular articles (785), newspaper coverage (4910) and radio/TV talks (3030).

So far, 2,459 Agri-clinics and Agribusiness centres have been set up. Twelve toll free Kisan Call Centres are now operational covering all the States.

Aid to drought-hit Chhattisgarh

1814. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the drought-hit Chhattisgarh has asked for the Central aid to help drought-hit districts;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware that Orissa is also similarly placed and whether the Central Government also propose to help the State in the matter; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) During South-West Monsoon, 2005 (1.6.2005 to 30.9.2005), the rainfall received in Chhattisgarh State as a whole was within the normal range. The State Government neither reported drought situation nor sent any Memorandum for Central assistance for drought relief;

(c) and (d) Orissa State also received rainfall during South-West Monsoon, 2005 within the normal range. The State Government neither reported drought situation nor sent any Memorandum for Central assistance for drought relief.

(State Governments do not often report isolated aberration and deal with localized problem at their level)

Expending training facilities

1815. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would expand the training facilities for crew to meet the demand of the tuna fishing industry;

(b) whether Government propose to set up training institutes like CIFNET in Visakhapatnam, Paradeep and other places;

(c) to what extent Government have developed a system of certification to allow non-Indians to work in the country in the fishery sector;

(d) whether it is a fact that Government are unable to meet the demand for trained crew in India; and

(e) the steps proposed to assist the Indian fishery sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) CIFNET with Headquarter at Kochi has two field units: (i) Chennai and (ii) Visakhapatnam. There is no proposal to set up training institutes at Paradeep and other places.

(c) The foreign national employed on board on the deep sea fishing vessel are given clearance by the Ministry after obtaining the clearance from Ministry of Home Affairs from security angle under intimation to the Coast Guard.

(d) The persons trained under Mate Fishing Vessel Course and Engine Driver Fishing Vessel Course organized by CIFNET is sufficient to man the fishing vessels in the country.

(e) The Central Government extends financial assistance to the States to implement schemes for development of fisheries sector. Two macro schemes entitled "Development of Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture" and "Development of Marine Fisheries, Infrastructure and Post Harvest Operations" encompassing various components are in place.

Decrease in area under cultivation

1816. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact the area under cultivation has decreased over the years in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, stating the major crops the cultivation areas of which have decreased; and

(c) the reasons for this decrease and the steps taken to bring more areas under cultivation?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The area under major foodgrains and other commercial crops

varied between 158 to 161 million hectares during the period 1999-2000 to 2004-05. However, in 2002-03 this area decreased to about 149 million hectares because of severe drought which affected several States in the country. In the subsequent years, because of better rainfall in monsoon season the area under foodgrains and commercial crops again increased to 160-161 million hectares. The details are given in the table below:

Crops	Area (Million Hectares)					
	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Foodgrains	123.1	121.0	122.8	113.9	123.3	120.2
Oilseeds	24.3	22.8	22.6	21.5	23.7	27.0
Cotton	8.7	8.5	9.1	7.7	7.6	8.9
Sugarcane	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.0	3.6
Jute & Mesta	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9
TOTAL:	161.4	157.7	160.0	148.6	159.7	160.6

For increasing area under cultivation more areas are being brought under irrigation. As per the latest information only around 40% of land under cultivation has been brought under irrigation. The other thrust areas include promotion of water and soil conservation through watershed approach, implementation of 'On Farm Water Management for increasing crop production in Eastern India' by exploiting abundant ground and surface water resources and implementation of National Horticulture Mission for promotion of sowing of horticulture crops.

New variety of wheat by ICAR

1817. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the scientists of Indian Institute of Agricultural Research have developed a new variety (Pusa Gold) of wheat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that the seeds of new variety of wheat are ready

to be sowed by farmers, if so, the rate per kilogram of this variety alongwith places where it will be available to farmers with full details thereof; and

(d) whether Government are aware of the percentage of protein and nutrition present in this variety of wheat and the duration of harvesting of the crop alongwith the quantum of profit that would accrue to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) The Indian Agriculture Research Institute, New Delhi has developed a wheat variety Pusa Gold (WR 544) suitable for very late sown irrigated conditions for growing in the National Capital Territory of Delhi. This variety is released for Delhi State.

(c) The seeds of this variety are available at Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi for the use of farmers. It is being sold at the rate of Rs. 15/- per kg.

(d) The protein content of this variety varied from 11.5 to 12.0% when grown under late and very late sown conditions. Its duration is about 90 to 100 days when sown in January. This variety will benefit the farmers who are growing wheat under late sown conditions. The average yield of this variety is about 35 q/ha under very late sown conditions.

Conference of KVKs

†1818. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the decision taken with regard to new objectives and new activities set in the conference of KVKs last month;

(b) whether discussions regarding the difficulties faced by KVKs have been held in this regard; and

(c) if so, the measures suggested to remove these difficulties?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) organized a National Conference on KVK on 27-28 October, 2005 at New Delhi.

The discussion focussed on the status of the readily transferable technologies, empowerment of KVKs with the technologies in a system

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

perspective, methodology of technology assessment and refinement, and how to further improve the efficiency, effectiveness and relevancy in KVK.

(b) and (c) Various issues related to the functioning of the KVKs were discussed. The key measures suggested are developing linkage with technology generating institutions, capacity building to convert research information into knowledge, working in a system perspective, availability of technology information in local languages to the farmers based on the documentaries and technology bulletins released, proper use of revolving fund, timely submission of the proposals for infrastructure development, re-designation of the KVK staff and recognizing best performing KVKs. It was decided to hold such a conference every year.

National Conference of KVKs

1819. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the first National Conference of Krishi Vigyan Kendras was held in New Delhi;

(b) if so, the details of the agenda; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take for Second Green Revolution in the country?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) A National Conference on KVK was organized by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) on 27-28 October, 2005 in New Delhi.

(b) the agenda of the Conference included the status of readily transferable agricultural technologies, empowerment of KVK with the technologies in a system perspective, methodology of technology assessment and refinement, and further improving the efficiency, effectiviness and relevancy in KVK.

(c) The ICAR has taken up a number of research programmes related to crop improvement and management, resource conservation and management, livestock and poultry improvement and management, fish production and processing, development of farm implement and machinery, processing and value addition, human resource development, technology assessment, refinement and demonstration, and socio-economic and policy issues.

US private companies in agricultural research sector

1820. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had opened its public sector agriculture research to U.S. private companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a joint declaration had been signed in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (d) A joint declaration between the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India and United States Department of Agriculture has been signed on Indo-Us knowledge Initiative on Agriculture. The objective of the U.S.-India Knowledge Initiative on Agricultural Education, Research, Service and Commercial Linkages (the "Initiative") is to re-energize our partnership by promoting teaching, research, service and commercial linkages to address contemporary challenges. One of the features of this Initiative will be a public-private partnership where the private sector can help identify research areas that have the potential for rapid commercialization, with a view to develop new and commercially viable technologies for agricultural advancement in both countries.

Development of pest-resistant rice

1821. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Directorate of Rice Research and Hyderabad based Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology have jointly developed a new variety of pest-resistant rice called Sambha Masuri;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government would take steps for taking the results of this research to the door-steps of rice producing farmers in our country to curb the menace of destruction of rice production, through widely prevalent bacterial leaf blight;

(d) if so, the details thereof, with regard to the measures to be taken; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Samba Mahsuri (BPT-5204) is already released and popular rice variety occupying a sizable area and being grown by a large number of farmers in the country. Bacterial Leaf Blight resistance genes (Xa21, xa5 and xa 13) have been transfered into this popular variety jointly by Directorate of Rice Research and Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology bsed in Hyderabad. These new lines of Samba Mahsuri carrying the above genes are under testing.

(c) and (d) The developed rice lines with bacterial leaf blight resistance genes in the background of Samba Mahsuri are being evaluated across the country under All India Coordinated Rice Improvement Project (AICRIP) trials for resistance, yield and quality traits. The availability of these lines to the farmers will depend on their performacne for various traits, their identification and release by Central/State Varietal Release Committee.

(e) Not Applicable.

Harnessing rain water for cultivation

1822. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have asked the farmers to harness rain water for cultivation;

(b) whether Government have identified the areas where rain water can be conveniently harnessed and gainfully utilized;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government will provide some financial help or incentives to farmers for the purpose; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (e) Rainwater harvesting and its utilization in agriculture is an age old

practice. However, the need and importance of water conservation and water harvesting has been stressed in the National Water Policy and National Agricultural Policy of Government of India.

Now peoples' participation in rainwater harvesting and its optimal utilization is advocated and practised in the schemes being implemented at Government of India level. Accordingly, farmers are motivated to harness rainwater for cultivation through training programmes. The following schemes implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Rural Development during Tenth Five Year Plan emphasize the above aspect.

Ministry of Agriculture

1. National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA)
2. River Valley Project and Flood Prone River (RVP & FPR)
3. Watershed Development Project for Shifting Cultivation areas (WDPSCA)

Ministry of Rural Development

1. Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP)
2. Integrated Wasteland Development Project (IWDP)
3. Desert Development Project (DDP)

Various soil and water conservation measures for treatment and development of the area on watershed development approach are taken up under above programmes. Rainwater harvesting is an integral part of water conservation programmes, which is taken up as per technical needs of the watershed development. The area treated under the above schemes/ programmes since inception till the end of 2004-05 is furnished in enclosed Statement-I (*See* below). For the farmers, all the above schemes are of grant based ones.

The rainwater harvesting structures recommended for different agro-climatic zones are given in the enclosed Statement-II (*See* below).

Statement-I

Area developed and amount invested under various Watershed Development Programmes, since Inception upto March, 2005

(Area: in lakh hectare; Expenditure: Rs. in crores)

Sl. No.	Ministry/Scheme and year of start	Area treated and Expenditure since inception up to Ninth Plan		Area treated and Expenditure in first 3 years of Tenth Plan (2002-05)		Total area treated and Expenditure since inception upto March 2005	
		Area.	Expenditure	Area.	Expenditure	Area.	Expenditure
(A)	**Ministry of Agri., Department of Agri. Coopn.**						
1	NWDPRA (1990-91)	69.79	1877.74	9.55	519.82	79.34	2397.56
2	RVP & FPR (1962 & 81)	54.88	1516.26	5.99	377.91	60.87	1894.17
3	WDPSCA (1974-75)	2.58	166.27	0.6	60.16	3.18	226.43
	Sub Total (A)	127.25	3560.27	16.14	957.89	143.39	4518.16
(b)	**Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources)**						
1	DPAP (1973-74)	13.79	897.2	12.5	844.99	26.29	1742.79
2	DDP (1977-78)	6.7	686.04	8	614.78	14.7	1300.82
3	IWDP (1988-89)	37.36	598.12	24.6	849.9	61.96	1448.02
	Sub Total (B)	57.85	2181.36	45.1	2309.67	102.95	4491.63
	TOTAL (A+B)	185.1	5741.63	61.24	3267.56	246.34	9009.79

Details of abbreviations:

NWDPRA	National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas
RVP & FPR	River Valley Project & Flood Prone River
WDPSCA	Watershed Development Project for Shifting Cultivation Areas
DPAP	Drought Prone Area Programme
DDP	Desert Development Programme
IWDP	Integrated Wasteland Development Project

Statement-II

Rain water harvesting structures in different agro-climatic zones

Sl. No.	Agro-climatic zone	Water Harvesting Structure	Recommendations
1.	Humid north-western Himalayas	(i) Roof water harvesting (ii) Diversion of perennial springs & streams in storage structures (iii) Village pond (iv) Collection from hill slope	Improvement in roof structures and use of proper material such as corrugated sheets for generating higher runoff and with arrangement of foul slush diversion system and proper storage structure for checking water from contamination.
2.	Himalayan foot hills	(i) Collections from hill slope (ii) Village ponds (iii) Roof water harvesting (iv) Interflow harvesting	Improvement in roof top harvesting system as above
3.	Humid high rainfall north eastern zone	(i) Roof water harvesting (ii) Diversion of perennial springs & streams in a storage structure (tank)	—do—
4.	Humid Assam Bengal plains	(i) Tank (ii) Anicut/check dam (iii) Gully plugging (iv) Contour bunding	Improved design of tank for minimising evaporation and seepage losses, control of sediment load and water pollution
5.	Sub-humid & humid Satluj Ganga Alluvial Zone	(i) Pond (ii) Check dam (iii) Gully plugging (iv) Contour bunding	—do—

1	2	3	4
6.	North-western semi-arid & arid Zone	(i) Nadi (ii) Tanka (iii) Khadin (iv) Percolation tank (v) Anicut (vi) Gully plugging (vii) Contour bunding (viii) Roof harvesting	(i) Adoption of improved design of Nadi and Tanka (ii) Sand filled reservoir (iii) Sub-surface barrier (iv) Flat batter tank
7.	Central semi-arid Vidhyan zone	(i) Pond (ii) Check dam (iii) Contour bunding (iv) Guliy plugging (v) Sub-surface dykes	—do—
8.	High rainfall high runoff Chhotanagpur plateau	Same as 4	—do—
9.	Assured rainfall deep black soil malwa plateau & Narmada basin	(i) Ponds (ii) Check dams (iii) Sub-surface dams	Improvement of existing systems
10.	Variable rainfall south central plateau zone	(i) Pond (ii) Check dam (iii) Percolation tank (iv) Bandhara (v) Gully plugging (vi) Sub-surface dam (vii) Contour bunding	(i) Flat batter tank (ii) Selection of suitable site and improvement of existing system, better water management
11.	Chhattisgarh plateau zone	Same as 10	Same as 10
12.	South-eastern brown/red soil zone	Ponds/Tanks Percolation Tanks Sub surface dams	Improvement of existing systems

1	2	3		4
13.	Southern variable rainfall, mixed soil zone	(i) (ii) (iii) (iv) (v) (vi)	Pond/tanks/kunta Nadi Check Dam Percolation Tank Sub-surface Dam Gully plugging	(i) Flat batter tank (ii) Selection of suitable site and (iii) Improvement of existing system for better water management
14.	Southern bi-modal rainfall zone	(i) (ii) (iii) (iv) (v)	Ponds/tanks Percolation tanks Gully plugging Contour bunding Check dams	Improvement of existing systems
15.	Eastern Coromandal	(i) (ii) (iii) (iv) (v) (vi)	Pond/tank/kunta Nadi Check dam Percolation tank Sub-surface dam Gully plugging	(i) Adoption of improved design of Nadi and tank (ii) Selection of suitable sites and improvement of existing system for better water management
16.	Western Malabar	(i) (ii) (iii) (iv) (v) (vi) (vii)	Pond/tank/kunta Check dam Percolation tank Contour bunding Bandhara Kolhapur type weirs Sub-surface dam	(i) Improvement in existing system, better water management (ii) Construction of structures at suitable sites

Vegetable prices

1823. SHRI SK. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of high prices of vegetables in the market; and

(b) the action being taken to bring down the prices?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. During the month of October and November, 2005, the prices of some vegetables like onion and potato increased. The prices of onion increased on account of lower arrivals in major wholesale markets in the country in October, 2005 due to erratic and excessive rainfall particularly in major onion growing States of Maharashtra and Gujarat. The hike in the price of potatoes was caused by erratic and unprecedented rainfall which damaged the advance crop in the month of September in States like Punjab and West Bengal. This has led to decreased availability of potato in the markets leading to hike in the prices. The Government made intervention through National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India to ensure stability in the prices. Government launched National Horticulture Mission in May, 2005 for doubling of horticulture production including onion and potato by 2011-2012.

Commission for agrarian crisis

1824. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Commission has been appointed by Government to look into the agrarian crisis in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Commission has submitted its report; and

(c) the major recommendations of the Commission?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Commission has so far submitted two Interim Reports.

(c) The First Interim Report of the National Commission on Farmers covers a wide range of recommendations dealing with integrated life saving support programme for farm families facing acute distress, productivity and livelihood enhancement in rainfed areas, a new deal for women in agriculture, strengthening and expanding the horticulture revolution, enhancing productivity, quality and global competitiveness of cotton, sustaining and expanding trade of farm commodities and its sanitary and phytosanitarty dimensions, village as knowledge center and food and

nutrition security of livestock and livelihoods. The Report also covers rehabilitation and alleviation of fishermen and farm families from distress due to TSUNAMI, empowerment of community based organizations and Panchayati Raj institutions and administrative initiatives like creation of a Gram Panchayat Mahila Fund for women.

The Second Interim Report of the Commission submitted recently to the Government *inter-alia* deals with food for all, fish for all, enhancing productivity, profitability, stability and sustainability of hill and arid agro ecosystems, coastal zone agriculture, mission for the prosperity of sugarcane farmers, conservation, cultivation and marketing of medicinal plants, organic farming, bio-fuels and agricultural markets reforms.

Fisheries and aquaculture losses due to Tsunami

1825. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the FAO has assessed the Tsunami losses to fisheries and aquaculture;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the FAO had suggested any long-term strategy to deal with the crises in future; and

(d) if so, the details of budget to be allocated for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) A joint assessment team of Asian Development Bank (ADB), United Nations System and the World Bank assessed the impact of Tsunami.

(b) to (d) As per assessment of the team, over 5000 mechanized boats, 8000 Ferro Reinforced Plastic (FRP) boats, 25000 boats of other categories and 35000 wooden catamarans were damaged. In addition, over 2340 outboard motors were lost due to Tsunami. Tsunami has also damaged the fish landing sites, affected shrimp culture and small-scale aquaculture. However, FAO has not suggested any specific strategy to deal with the crisis in future as such.

Assistance to Punjab for boosting agriculture

1826. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total area of agricultural land in hectares under cultivation in Punjab at present; and

(b) the steps taken and incentives being given by the Centre to boost the agriculture in Punjab?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The total area under major foodgrains, oilseeds and other commercial crops in Punjab during 2004-05 in 7026 thousand hectares. The details are given in the table below:

Crop	Area ('000 Hectares)
Foodgrains	6343
Oilseeds	88
Sugarcane	86
Cotton	509
TOTAL:	7026

(b) The programmes aimed at boosting production and productivity of foodgrains in different States, including Punjab, are given below:

(i) Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Rice Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Rice)

(ii) Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Wheat Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Wheat)

(iii) Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Coarse Cereals Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Coarse Cereals).

From October 2000, these schemes have been subsumed under Macro Management Programme with a view to provide flexibility to the States according to the regionally differentiated needs of the States. To boost agriculture sector and enhancing yields, improved crop production

technologies are being popularized. Under this scheme assistance is provided for various inputs and training of farmers/extension workers as well as supply of critical inputs like seeds, sprayers and water saving devices like sprinklers and drip systems etc.

In order to increase the production and productivity of oilseeds and pulses, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize" (ISOPOM) is being implemented since 01.04.2004. Under this scheme, assistance is provided for production of breeder seed, foundation seed and certified seed, crash programme for quality seed production, distribution of certified seed, and Minikits, infrastructure development, integrated Pest Management etc. Besides, front line demonstrations on improved production technologies in oilseeds and pulses are being conducted through Indian Council of Agricultural Research as a transfer of technology efforts among the farmers.

During 1990, pulses were brought under Technology Mission on oilseeds so as to tackle increasing import of pulses. The objectives set for the Technology Mission were (i) to increase the production of pulses. (ii) to reduce the import of pulses; and (iii) to achieve self sufficiency in pulses. Consequent to the setting up of Technology Mission on Pulses breakthrough in increasing pulses production has been achieved through an Integrated approach by introducing new crop technologies, supply of inputs and extension services support for marketing and post harvest technologies and excellent coordination/cooperation between various organizations/ departments and Ministries.

An outlay of Rs.142.86 crore has been made for the State of Punjab for Agriculture and Allied Activities for the Annual Plan 2005-06. Further, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has released a number of high yielding varieties of foodgrains crops, oilseeds, sugarcane and cotton for increasing production and productivity in Punjab.

Investment in Agriculture Sector

1827. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that investment in agriculture has gone down and is highly inadequate, and land resources for agriculture have come under strain over the years;

(b) how far investment in agriculture and credit facilities for the farmers, have fallen short of requirement during the past five years, and how far land for agriculture has squeezed in these years in the country, State-wise;

(c) the steps taken during 2004-05 and this year to make good these resources; and

(d) the further steps being taken to improve investment and credit facilities for agriculture?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) According to statistics of gross capital formation complied by Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), the total investment in agriculture including allied sectors of foresty, logging and fishing, measured in terms of Gross Capital Formation (GCF) increased in real terms (at 1993-94 prices) from Rs 15,249 crore in 1993-94 to Rs 24,186 crore in 2003-04. The agriculture land which is a major component of land resources fluctuated around 183 million hectares from 1994-95 onwards.

(b) The position of total investment in terms of GCF in agriculture and credit facilities extended to farmers in the last three years is given below:

Trends in Investment (Gross Capital Formation) and credit Facilities

Year	GCF at 1993-94 prices (Rs. in crore)	Credit Disbursement (Crore)(Apr.Mar.)
2001-02	20360	62045
2002-03	21500	69560
2003-04	24186	86981.00
2004-05	N.A	115242.81
2005-06	N.A	81679.58 (up to September, 2005)

Sources: CSO& NABARD.

The target of agricultural credit flow for the year 2004-05 was fixed at Rs. 1,05,000.00 crore against which the achievement made Rs. 1,15,242.81 crore. For the year 2005-06, the target is fixed at Rs. 1,42,000.00 crore and the achievement made so far upto 30-9-2005 is Rs. 81679.58 crore (57.52%).

As regards, the agricultural land in the country, it has remained more or less at the same level. The latest State-wise information available for last three years is given in the enclosed Statement (see below)

(c) The Government has taken number of initiatives which include multi-pronged strategy to address several issues in the agricultural sector. A series of policy initiatives has been taken in several vital areas like credit, irrigation facilities, crop diversification, marketing infrastructure, horticulture, etc. to enhance production and productivity. The Government has underscored the importance of efforts aimed at turing the focus of commercial banks regional rural banks and cooperative banks towards providing credit, especially production credit, to farm households. The other areas for higher investment include micro irrigation technology comprising drip and sprinkler irrigation National Horticulture Mission has been taken up with focus on backward and forward linkages, and development/ strengthening of agriculture marketing infrastructure, grading and standardization.

(d) To improve investment in agriculture, steps have been taken to raise public investment in irrigation projects by increasing the outlay on the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) from Rs. 2800.00 crore in 2004-05 to Rs. 4800.00 crore in 2005-06. Similarly, a sum of Rs. 400.00 crore has been provided in the Union Budged 2005-06 for promoting micro irrigation.

A Comprehensive Credit Policy was announced by the Government on 18-6-2004 in order to double agriculture credit in next three years and to provide debt relief to the farmers affected by natural calamities. Several policy initiatives like broadening the scope of Kissan Credit Cards and revision in the norms of fixing scale of finance have been taken to meet realistic need of the farmers. A package providing for restructuring debts of farmers in distress and in arrears have been put in to operation that provide rescheduling of outstanding loans of period of five years including moratorium of two years.

Statement

State-wise Agricultural Land/Cultivable land for the years from 1998-99 *to* 2002-03 *(Provisional)*

(000 Hectares)

State	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Andhra Pradesh	15854	15847	15841	15816	15778
Assam	3243	3224	324	3225	3225
Bihar	10837	10836	6651	6642	6641
Chhattisgarh	@	@	5608	5612	5600
Gujarat	12354	12353	12354	12357	12357
Haryana	3816	3799	3783	3776	3735
Himachal Pradesh	812	806	804	801	806
Jammu and Kashmir	1050	1050	1050	1050	1050
Jharkhand	@	@	4184	4184	4184
Karnataka	12905	12912	12916	12910	12908
Kerala	2441	2420	2393	2382	2381
Madhya Pradesh	22856	22888	17278	17336	17373
Maharashtra	21112	12109	21125	21196	21196
Orissa	7975	7975	7473	7473	7473
Punjab	4331	4341	4312	4312	4312
Rajasthan	25682	25658	25646	25649	25633
Tamil Nadu	8289	8281	8273	8265	8251
Uttaranchal	@	@	1416	1416	1416
Uttar Pradesh	20798	20821	19389	19334	19315
West Bengal	5821	5833	5899	5933	5854
Other States/UTs	3457	3460	3453	3326	3356
All India	183631	183613	183072	182997	182845

Note: *Other States/UTs include Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, A & Islands, Chandigarh, D&N Haveli, Delhi, Daman & Diu, Lakshadweep and Pondicherry.

@Since the State of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttaranchal were constituted in 2000-01, the agriculture land/cultivable land of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttaranchal was included in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh respectively during the period of 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

Genetic qualities of golden rice

1828. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has signed a work plan with International Rice Research Institute, Phillipines to enhance genetic qualities of 'golden rice':

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the genetically modified golden rice would curb blindness among children; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Indian Council of Agricultural Research and International Rice Research Institute, Philippines have signed a workplan for the period 2005-08 which includes a project on 'golden rice' entitled "The Development of Adapted Germplasm for India with High Levels and Provitamin Carotenoids" with an objective to transfer the Provitamin-A trait/events from 'golden rice' lines to popular Indian rice varieties.

(c) and (d) 'Golden Rice' is a variety of rice engineered to produce beta carotene (pro-vitamin A) to help to combat vitamin A deficiency which is one of the causes of blindness.

Compensation to farmers under NAIS

†1829. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the target of the National Agriculture Insurance Scheme for the year 2004-05 and the current Year to compensate losses of farmers due to natural calamity, drought or heavy rainfall;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) the names of the States in which the farmers have been benefited by this plan; and

(c) the yard-sticks fixed for the farmers who have been brought under this plan?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) is a demand driven scheme. The farmers covered during 2004-05 and 1st half of the current year (*i.e.* up to 31st October, 2005) are 162.18 lakh and 110.92 lakh respectively.

(b) Under NAIS, farmers of following States have been benefited;

Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Sikkim, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Tripura, Orissa, Uttaranchal, Rajasthan, Haryana, Pondicherry and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

(c) All farmers growing notified crops inthe notified areas are eligible for coverage under NAIS.

MSP for millets

†1830. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to revive the support price of millet;

(b) whether Government propose to make a fool-proof system through Food Corporation of India for the purchase of barley at the support price; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The Government has announced the Price Policy for Kharif and Rabi Crops of 2005-06 Season. The Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for Millets namely Bajra, Jowar and Ragi fixed by the Government are as follows:—

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Crop	Rs. per quintal
Bajra	525
Jowar	525
Ragi	525

(b) and (c) These Millets are procured by the State Governments to extend the benefits of MSP to the farmers as and when need arises. The State Governments retain the quantity required for the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and the balance stock is disposed of by the FCI on "as is where is basis" by open auction/tender and the difference between the economic cost and disposal price is paid as subsidy to the concerned State Governments.

Reviewing the utility of National Commission on farmers

1831. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the role of the National Commission on farmers;

(b) the structure of the Commission;

(c) whether any original ideas have been offered by the Commission since its inception;

(d) whether Government have assessed the utility of this body; and

(e) the steps proposed to review the need of this body?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) The National Commission on Farmers was set up in February, 2004 to examine and recommend policies, programmes and measures on various issues confronting India Farmers and to suggest appropriate inverventions for improving the economic viability and sustainability of diversified agriculture including horticulture, livestock, dairy and fisheries.

The Commission comprises of a Chairman, two full time Members, four part-time Members and a Member Secretary.

(c) The Commission has so far submitted two Interim Reports making

recommendations on various facets of agriculture and its allied sectors. The tenure of the Commission is upto 13th October, 2006 by which it is to submit its Final report to the Government.

(d) and (e) Since the Commission has its Terms of Reference, the question of review of the utility of the Commission does not arise.

Life Saving Support Insurance Scheme for small and medium farmers

1832. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any recommendation by any Commission to inititate a Life Saving Support Insurance Scheme to save the small by medium farmers from the pitfalls of market;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to implement these recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) National Commission on Farmers (NCF) in its first report on 'serving farmers and saving farming' has recommended integrated life 'Saving Support Programme which *inter alia* includes improvement in the existing crop insurance system and introduction of an integrated insurance package covering accident/death/medical cover, loss to dwelling unit and other property.

(c) A Joint Group was constituted by the Government of India to study the improvements required in the existing crop insurance scheme. The Group has submitted its report and has suggested number of improvements. The Government, at present, is consulting different stakeholders for the improvements in the existing crop insurance scheme.

Assistance to Andhra Pradesh under new Agriculture Policy

1833. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the present trend of agricultural production in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the extent to which assistance can be given to the farmers of the State under the new Agriculture Policy; and

(c) the details of assistance provided under the new Agricultural Policy to the farmers of the State in the last one year?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The present trend in the production of foodgrains, oilseeds, cotton, sugarcane and jute & mesta in Andhra Pradesh during the last five years is shown in the table below:

Crops	Production (Million Tonnes)					
	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05*
Foodgrains	13.70	16.03	14.84	10.65	13.70	13.12
Oilseeds	1.38	2.51	1.61	1.26	1.61	2.27
Cotton	1.60	1.66	1.88	1.09	1.89	2.20
Sugarcane	1851	17.69	18.08	15.39	15.07	16.17
Jute & Mesta	0.62	0.69	0.67	0.61	0.47	0.45

*Fourth Advance Estimates

(b) and (c) The Government of India has accorded the highest priority to revitalization of agriculture sector and bringing improvement in the conditions of farmers. For this purpose a number of schemes are undertaken in various State including Andhra Pradesh, and farmers are given assistance under different components. Most of the scheme are being implemented through the State Governments.

With a view to provide flexibility to the States according to the regionally differentiated needs of the States to boost agriculture sector and enhancing yields, the Central Government is implementing the Macro Management Programme by integrating 17 schemes.

Under this programme assistance is provided for various inputs and training of farmers/extension workers as well as supply of critical inputs like seeds, sprayers and water saving devices like sprinklers and drip systems etc.

The approved pattern of assistance is in the ratio of 90:10 for the Centre and the States respectively. The allocations, Central Assistance released and utilization in respect of Andhra Pradesh in 2004-05 were Rs. 3600.00 lakh, Rs. 4363.00 lakh and Rs. 3712.18 lakh respectively. Further under the National Horticulture Mission, schemes pertaining to

horticulture development have been taken up in a more focused manner. So far, an amount of Rs. 4320.96 lakhs has been provided to Andhra Pradesh.

Research regarding viability of Jatropha plant

1834. PROF. P.J. KURIAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE b pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has done any research on the Jatropha plant and its viability for agricultural promotion;

(b) if so, the details of its possible utilities; and

(c) the action taken by Government to promote Jatropha cultivation?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

- *Jatropha* oil as bio-fuel.
- *Jatropha* cake as animal feed
- *Jatropha* plant has medicinal value.
- Flowers of *Jatropha* attract bees.
- Use as a wind break or as a hedge for erosion control.
- *Jatropha* oil seed cake is used as organic manure.

(i) The study on evaluation, characterization on *Jatropha curcas* is being carried out under the All India Coordinated Research Network on Underutilized Crops at National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, Pusa Campus, New Delhi through SAUs.

(ii) Adhoc Research Project on Survey, collection, evaluation and multiplication of elite germplasm of *Pongamia pinnata, and Jatropha curcas* at Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture Hyderabad *w.e.f.* 1st April, 2004.

(iii) Adhoc Net work project on 'Tree Borne Oilseeds' (TBOs) at Directorate of oil seeds research, Hyderabad *w.e.f.* 1st April, 2005.

(iv) Research Project on Germplasm collection, genetic improvement and multiplication of elite material in *Jatropha* at Chaudhary Charan

Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar *w.e.f.* 1st August, 2005.

- 328 farmers, NGO & State Government Officers were trained on cultivation of *Jatropha* and Karanj and National Research Centre for Agroforestry, Jhansi.
- Three biofuel based agroforestry models developed in the farmer's field and 113 accessions of *Jatropha* collected from Northern India.

(v) A Central Sector Scheme "Integrated Development of Tree Borne Oilseeds" is being implemented in the country through National Oil Seeds and Vegetable Oils Development Board (NOVOD) to accelerate the production of Tree Borne Oilseeds including jatropha during 10th Plan peirod. The scheme envisages development of elite planting material and model plantation, establishment of TBOs garden, installation pre-processing and processing facilities etc. The needs based research & development programmes have also been initiated by making networking of research institutions in the country. Besides, model plantation have been organized by using elite planting material in more than 8000 ha. area during 2004-05 in 21 States.

Subsidy to micro irrigation

†1835 SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have formulated a proposal to provide subsidy upto 50 per cent to micro irrigation project;

(b) if so, the outline of the proposal and whether it is a fact that the agricultural land under micro irrigation so far is only 20 lakh hectares;

(c) if not, the facts thereof; and

(d) the potential of expansion of micro irrigation as a result of the above proposal?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture has formulated a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Micro irrigation to be implemented during the Tenth Five Year Plan, with the objective of increasing the coverage of area under drip and sprinkler irrigation in the country from the current level of 20 lakh hectare (6 lakh hectare under drip and 14 lakh hectare under sprinkler irrigation). The Scheme envisages financial assistance to the beneficiaries @ 50% of the cost of the system.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) An area of 6.2 lakh hectares is proposed to be brought under micro irrigation during the Tenth Plan period under the scheme.

Subsidy for Micro Irrigation

1836. SHRI C. PERUMAL:
SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to provide 50 per cent subsidy for micro irrigation projects such as sprinkler and drip irrigation systems;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Central Government will bear the total expenditure; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) The Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture has formulated a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Micro irrigation to be implemented during the Tenth Five Year Plan with the objective of increasing the coverage of area under drip and sprinkler irrigation in the country for increasing crop productivity with efficient use of available water resources and to develop the skill of farmers and field functionaries through Human Resource Development (HRD). The scheme envisages assistance to farmers @ 50% of cost of the system.

(c) and (d) As per the Scheme, the financial assistance is to be shared jointly between the Centre and State Governments in the ratio of 80:20.

Crop harvesting losses

1837. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that crop harvesting losses in India are as huge as Rs. 65,000 crores per year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of steps being contemplated by Government to control and minimize harvesting losses of such a magnitude?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) In a study conducted by the Directorate of Marketing & Inspection post harvest losses at producers' level have been estiamted to be varying from 1.79 to 7.14 per cent for foodgrains and pulses and from 16.35 to 30.00 per cent in the case of fruits and vegetables. The wastage depends on nature of produce, its shelf life, mode of transportation, packaging, processing, distance from the market, availability of infrastructure facilities like rural godowns and cold storage etc.

(c) The Government has taken the following step to reduce post-harvest losses in the country.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research has been developing new techniques/systems to minimize the losses in agricultural produce in the country through the Central Institute of Post Harvest Engineering & Technology, Ludhiana and the All India Coordinated Research Project on Post Harvest Technology. The All India Coordinated Research Project on Post harvest Technology has 33 co-operative centres located throughout the country to develop regionally differentiated post harvest technology packages for crop, livestock product and fisheries produce in terms of reducing post harvest losses, aiding value to the main produce and by-products.

National Horticulture Board, an autonomous body under this Ministry is implementing programmes to reduce post harvest losses by providing investment subsidy on the capital cost of infrastructure projects for post-harvest handling, processing and marketing of horticulture produce. The rate of subsidy is 20 percent of the project cost with a miximum limit of Rs. 25 lakh per project.

The Department is also implementing schemes for construction/modernization of Cold Storage and Rural godowns in the country with a view to provide scientific storage facilities to farmers. Under these schemes, subsidy is provided @ 25% of capital cost of the storage project in general

and @ 33.33 per cent in case of North Eastern States, hilly areas and Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes enterpreneurs. The scheme of Construction of Rural Godown has recently been revised to restrict subsidy on the storage projects for individual, companies and corporations @ 15 percent of the project cost.

Declining average agricultural growth rate

1838. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the annual average agriculture growth rate has dipped from 4.9 per cent in the Eighth Five Year Plan to 1.3 per cent;

(b) if so, the reasons for the poor performance of the agriculture sector; and

(c) whether the agriculture sector is in a position fo face competition from the developed countries' agro-products, if not, the manner in which Government propose to strengthen it in the light of WTO agreement?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The annual average agriculture growth rate has declined from 4.7% in Eighth Plan to 1.2% in first three years of the 10th Five Year Plan period.

(b) Indian Agriculture continues to be heavily influenced by fluctuations in rainfall as about 60% of the net sown area is rainfed. The decline in the growth rate was due to weather related shocks caused mainly by deficiency in rainfall. Inadequate irrigation facilities also eroded the capacity of the agriculture sector to withstand such shocks.

(c) The Government is continuously monitoring the surge in imports of sensitive items on a regular basis. Over the last few years, several measures have been initiated for enhancing the level of protection to the farmers and boosting exports after the removal of Quantitative Restrictions (QRs.) Some of the specific measures taken in this regard are given below:

(i) Import duty on a number of agriculture products has been increased;

(ii) Import of all packaged commodities has been subjected to compliance of the standards as applicable on the domestic commodities;

(iii) Import of all primary agriculture products has been subjected to a import permit to be issued under the Plant Quarantine Order.

(iv) The Government has initiated various measures to promote the export of agriculture products which, *inter alia*, include setting up

of Agri-Export Zones to provide enhanced international market access, improved infrastructural facilities, better flow of credit, assistance for reducing the market costs as also removal of export restrictions.

(iv) In the WTO negotiations on agriculture, the development countries have been accorded Special and Differential treatment in all areas of the Agreement on Agriculture including tariff reduction, domestic support and export subsidies. They have also been allowed two special mechanisms, namely, Special Products and special Safeguard Mechanism in order to meet their food security, livelihood security and rural development needs.

Scientists-farm club

1839. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a plan to set up a scientists-farm club; and

(b) if so, the details of main activities of the club?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) There is no plan to set-up scientists-farm club by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). The Council has established a network of Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVK) Farm science centres in the country as a model for technology assessment, refinement and demonstration unit in the country. In order to accelerate the process of dissemination of technology, a number of extension activities involving the interaction between the subject matter specialists and the farmers are organized by the KVKs, such as Advisory services, Diagnostic vistits, Ex-trainees' sammelans, Exhibitions, Field days, Film shows, Group discussions, Kisan gosthis, Kisan melas, and Seminars/Workshops.

Valuation of sale of Township of HFCL

1840. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a meeting was held on 29th June, 2004 in Delhi under the Chairmanship of the then Minister of State (Chemicals & Fertilizers) with the officials of Goverment of West Bengal, Asansol-Durgapur Development Authority (ADDA), Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. (HFCL) and others regarding finalisation of the valuation for outright sale of the township and water treatment plant of the closed Durgapur unit of M / s. HFCL to ADDA ; and

(b) if so, the details of the same, decisions taken in the meeting and status of implementation of the decisions?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No decision with regard to sale was reached in the said meeting.

National Pharmaceutical Authority

1841. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a National Pharmaceutical Authority and merge the existing NPPA with this proposed Authority as has been recommended by a high powered committee;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which this Authority would be set up?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (c) A Task force under the Chairmanship of Dr.Pronab Sen, Principal Adviser, Planning Commission was constituted to explore options other than price control to make available life saving drugs at reasonable prices. The Task Force has submitted its report to the Government on the 20th September, 2005. The Task Force has recommended, *inter alia*, to establish a National Authority on Drugs and Therapeutics (NADT). The proposed NADT would integrate the officers of the Drugs Controller General of India, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) and the National Phamaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), along with all the powers and functions of these bodies.

The Government in consultation with various stakeholders is examining the recommendations of the Task Force. Based on this a view would be taken regarding the setting up of the National Authority on Drugs and Therapeutics.

Profit margin on Generic Medicines to retailers

1842. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that pharma companies are giving huge margins to the extent of 2000 per cent to retailers on their generic medicines; and

(b) what steps have been taken by Government to stop this practice and save the poor patients?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Prices of Scheduled drugs and formulations based thereon are fixed by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) in accordance with the provisions of para 7 of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO,95). A price of a Scheduled formulation is fixed by allowing Maximum Allowable Post Manufacturing Expenses (MAPE) @ of 100% on ex-factory cost for indigenously manufactured Scheduled formulations and upto 50% of the landed cost for imported Scheduled formulations. The trade margin to retailers in respect of Scheduled formulations is fixed at 16%.

Prices of non-Scheduled medicines are fixed by the manufactures themselves keeping in view various factors like cost of production, marketing/ selling expenses, R&D expenses, trade commission, market competition, product innovation, product quality etc. The Government takes corrective measures where the public interest is found to be adversely affected.

The Goverment/National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) regularly monitors the movement of prices of medicines of mass consumption marketed through trade channel and intervenes whenever instances of unreasonable increase in prices affecting public interest adversely are noticed.

The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has collected data on trade margin being offered by the manufacturers to the retailers for a limited sample. It was noted that some manufacturers had offered high margin to the retailers. However, the market share of such medicines was small.

(b) A Committee under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (PI) was constituted to examine the span of price control (including trade margin) in the light of National Common Minimum Programme and the observations of the Supreme Court in SLP NO (C) 3668/2003 and to suggest measures for fulfilling the objective of National Common Minimum Programme to ensure the availability of life saving drugs at reasonable prices. This Committee has submitted its interim report to the Government. Subsequently, a Task Force under the Chairmanship of Dr. Pronab Sen, Principal Adviser, Planning Commission was constituted to explore options other price control to make available life saving drugs at reasonable prices. During its meetings, the Task Force deliberated upon almost all the recommendations made in its Interim Report by the Committee under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary. The Task Force has submitted its report to the Goverment on the 20th September, 2005.

The Drug Policy, as amended from time to time, is directed towards ensuring abundant availability of quality drugs at reasonable prices. The

Government is consultation with various stakeholders is examinig the recommedations of the Task Force. Based on this a new Pharmaceutical Policy is likely to be announced shortly.

FCI Depots

†1843. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) The number of base depots of FCI for the distribution of foodgrains under the PDS, State-wise;

(b) whether these depots are sufficient for fulfilling the requirements of the States, particularly of Bihar;

(c) whether Government propose to open more depots in Bihar; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) As on 30th September, 2005 the Food Corporation of India (FCI) had a total of 1451 godowns (owned/hired/covered/CAP) with a total storage capacity of 247.74 lakh MTs. The State-wise details are given in the enclosed statement (*See* below).

(b) to (d) Yes, Sir. However, in Bihar State, the six godowns are under construction by Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC)/ State Warehoushing Corporation under Seven Years Guarantee Scheme. The details are as under:—

Name of the Place	Constructing Agency	Capacity
Siwan	CWC	5000MTs
Supaul	CWC	5000MTs
Teghra	CWC	2500MTs
Bhagalpur	SWC	3000MTs
Raxual	SWC	9000MTs
Sasaram	SWC	10000MTs

Further, two godowns from CWC and five godowns from SWC constructed under Seven Years Guarantee Scheme have been taken over by FCI. The details are as under:—

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Name of the Place	Constructing Agency	Capacity
Siwan	CWC	5000MTs
Madhepura	CWC	5000MTs
Ara	SWC	977MTs
Forbesganj	SWC	3140MTs
Gulabbagh(Purnea)	SWC	3125MTs
Sitamarhi	SWC	2500MTs
Betiah	SWC	5000MTs

Statement

State-wise number of Godowns and Storage Capacity available with the Food Corporation of India as on 30.09.2005

State	Number of Godowns (Covered & Cap)
Bihar	45
Jharkhand	16
Orissa	65
West Bengal	41
Sikkim	2
Assam	35
Arunachal Pradesh	4
Meghalaya	6
Mizoram	5
Tripura	6
Manipur	2
Nagaland	5
Delhi	10
Haryana	132

State	Number of Godowns (Covered & Cap)
Himachal Pradesh	16
Jammu & Kashmir	18
Punjab	351
Chandigarh	15
Rajasthan	63
Uttar Pradesh	126
Uttaranchal	28
Andhra Pradesh	140
Kerala	29
Karnataka	58
Tamil Nadu	31
Pondicherry	5
Gujarat	25
Maharashtra	63
Goa	1
Madhya Pradesh	59
Chhattisgarh	49
TOTAL:	1451

Nutritious flour and foodgrains under PDS

†1844. SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to distribute nutritious flour and nutritious foodgrains under Public Distribution System in order to overcome the problem of malnutrition prevalent in pregnant ladies and children;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) if not, whether Government would formulate any comprehensive scheme in this regard?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) Since nutritional security is part and parcel of the food security, the State Governments/UTs have been requested in the Regional Conferences held recently on strengthening the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), to consider launching pilot projects for introduction of fortified atta for BPL and Antyodaya families in the tribal/the districts where malnutrition is high. Under the Centrally sponsored Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, which is being implemented through the State Governments, supplementary nutrition is provided to Children below 6 years and pregnant and lactating mothers.

Norms for non-carbonated drinks

1845. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Bureau of Indian Standards is thinking to evolve norms for non-carbonated drinks;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of carbonated drinks that are available in the market with BIS certification;

(d) whether the BIS norms are at per with international standards; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) Bureau of Indian Standards does not have any proposal for formulating standards for non-carbonated drinks.

(c) to (e) None of the Carbonated drinks available in the market bear BIS certification.

Payments to sugarcane growers

1846. SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the statutory minimum price and the State administered price for sugarcane, State-wise and year-wise during the last five years; and

(b) the average price effectively paid to growers, and the balance due to be paid to the growers, State-wise and year-wise during that period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) A statement showing the range of Statutory Minimum Prices (SMP) fixed by the Central Government and the price paid by the sugar factories during the last five years, State-wise, year-wise is enclosed as Statement-I (*See* below).

A statement showing the cane price payable, cane price paid and the balance amount to be paid at the end of the sugar season(s) i.e. 30th September, during the last five years is enclosed as Statement-II

Statement-I

Range of statutory minimum price of sugarcane notified and the price paid by the sugar mills in different States of the country

(In Rs. per quintal)

State	2000-01		2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05	
	SMP	Price Paid	SMP	Price Paid	SMP	Price paid	SMP	Price Paid#	SMP	Price Paid##
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Punjab	59.50 to 72.10	96.00 to 100.00	62.78 to 78.84	100.00	69.50 to 85.10	70.00 to 100.00	75.55 to 93.40	92.90 to 100.00	94.50 to 92.98	92.00 to 100.00
Haryana	59.50 to 68.60	104.00 to 110.00	64.24 to 75.92	104.00 to 110.00	69.50 to 87.54	104.00 to 110.00	79.80 to 93.40	104.00 to 110.00	75.38 to 96.50	85.55 to 117.00
Rajasthan	59.50	N.A.	64.24	86.30 to 107.50	77.70	N.A.	—	86.30 to 107.50	—	86.30 to 107.50
Uttar Pradesh	59.50 to 74.20	86.00 to 95.00	62.05 to 81.76	92.50 to 100.00	69.50 to 89.18	69.50 to 100.00	73.00 to 92.50	71.95 to 100.00	74.50 to 95.62	81.95 to 112.00

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Uttaranchal	—	—	—	——	71.14 to 82.62	N.A.	79.80 to 84.90	79.85 to 100.00	80.66 to 87.70	76.67 to 112.00
Madhya Pradesh	65.80 to 74.20	77.50 to 94.05	62.05 to 78.11	65.48 to 96.48	73.60 to 88.36	75.00 to 97.02	81.50 to 91.70	82.00 to 98.98	80.66 to 95.62	77.50 to 117.23
Chhattisgarh	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	86.82	N.A.
Gujarat	64.40 to 81.90	65.00 to 85.50	66.43 to 83.22	66.43 to 83.22	76.88 to 96.56	48.50 to 51.00	85.75 to 101.05	80.50 to 132.60	84.18 to 100.90	94.00 to 163.60
Maharashtra	59.50 to 96.60	60.00 to 96.60	62.05 to 100.74	62.05 to 96.00	69.50 to 113.78	56.00 to 96.56	73.00 to 118.90	56.00 to 103.60	74.45 to 110.58	70.00 to 136.00
Bihar	60.20 to 66.50	81.00 to 86.00	64.24 to 69.35	66.84 to 86.00	69.50 to 76.88	69.50	73.00 to 83.20	67.25 to 83.20	75.38 to 85.06	72.27 to 95.00
Assam	59.50	72.50	62.05	74.00	—	—	—	—	—	—
Andhra Pradesh	62.30 to 83.30	67.90 to 88.10	63.51 to 86.14	63.51 to 86.14	69.50 to 94.92	69.50 to 92.18	77.25 to 101.90	69.06 to 101.90	74.50 to 101.78	74.50 to 103.40
Karnataka	60.20 to 93.30	60.00 to 83.50	62.05 to 92.71	70.00 to 88.00	69.50 to 103.12	69.50 to 91.60	73.00 to 108.70	65.00 to 102.47	74.50 to 99.14	77.14 to 130.00
Tamil Nadu	59.50 to 76.30	59.50 to 87.93	63.51 to 81.76	64.24 to 82.89	69.50 to 95.74	69.50 to 95.74	76.40 to 103.60	70.32 to 99.02	74.50 to 100.02	78.02 to 100.02
Kerala	N.A.	N.A.	62.05	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	73.00	—	—	—
Orissa	59.50 to 74.20	59.50 to 83.00	67.16 to 75.19	75.00 to 78.00	73.60 to 75.24	69.82 to 83.00	77.25 to 83.20	73.62 to 85.00	74.50 to 92.10	80.00 to 92.10
West Bengal	59.50	76.00 to 84.00	62.05	77.00 to 85.00	69.50	N.A.	73.85	79.60	74.50	N.A.
Nagaland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pondicherry	59.50	59.50	62.05 to 65.43	62.05	69.50	64.50	84.05 to 85.75	91.00	85.94	101.00
Goa	71.40	N.A.	70.81	N.A.	73.60	N.A.	79.80	80.00	78.02	70.00 to 105.00

(P) Provisional (N.A.) Not Available (#) As on 30.9.2004 (##) As on 30.9.2005

(*) In respect of the States of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka and Orissa the final cane price payable by the sugar mills is decided after the closer of sugar season.

Statement-II

State-wise season-end cane price arrears for the last five sugar seasons

(In crore rupees)

State	Sugar season 2004-05	Sugar season 2003-04	Sugar season 2002-03	Sugar season 2001-02	Sugar season 2000-01
Punjab	Nil	14.48	144.83	79.22	6.31
Haryana	0.04	Nil	13.43	0.03	29.28
Rajasthan	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Uttar Pradesh	19.44	229.68	819.77	613.45	151.61
Uttaranchal	0.82	24.68	82.16	97.77	—
Madhya Pradesh	0.05	0.96	3.42	2.96	4.45
Chhattisgarh	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Gujarat	107.01	14.01	58.29	57.60	86.16
Maharashtra	10.40	165.31	86.97	57.85	19.12
Bihar	0.46	3.99	35.40	4.03	16.54
Assam	Nil	Nil	Nil	0.04	Nil
Andhra Pradesh	Nil	7.18	76.33	5.25	11.20
Karnataka	32.66	165.33	101.13	81.34	70.60
Tamil Nadu	37.50	20.34	194.79	111.59	183.42
Kerala	Nil	Nil	1.77	Nil	2.76
Pondicherry	Nil	Nil	1.48	0.14	0.06
Orissa	Nil	Nil	Nil	3.70	2.87
W. Bengal	Nil	Nil	2.49	Nil	Nil
Goa	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
TOTAL:	208.38	645.96	1622.26	1114.97	584.38

Source: Fortnightly reports on cane price arrears for the respective sugar season as on 30th September.

Increasing MSP/PP for sugarcane

1847. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a pressing demand from the SUGARFED and sugarcane growers of Punjab, Haryana, U.P., Maharashtra and other States for enhancement of sugarcane Procurement Prices;

(b) if so, the prevailing Procurement Price of sugarcane in different States during the last three years and the extent of increase demanded; and

(c) whether the Central Government has fixed a Minimum Support Price of sugarcane; if so, the details thereof and how far it represents an increase in the existing Procurement Prices, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir. In the recent past, no such demand has been received by the Central Government.

(b) and (c) The Central Government do not fix the Procurement Price of sugarcane. However, the Statutory Minimum Price (SMP) of sugarcane which is payable by the sugar factories to the sugarcane growers is fixed every year under the provisions of the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966. The SMP of sugarcane for the sugar season 2005-06 has been fixed at Rs.79.50 per quintal linked to 9% recovery. The SMP of sugarcane for the last three sugar seasons is given below:-

Sugar season	SMP of sugarcane (Rs. per quintal)	Linked to basic recovery of
2002-2003	69.50	8.5% (Increase @ Rs.0.76 for 0.1%)
2003-2004	73.00	8.5% (Increase @ Rs.0.85 for 0.1%)
2004-2005	74.50	8.5% (Increase @ Rs.0.88 for 0.1%)

The SMP fixed by the Central Government is uniformly applicable to all the States in the country.

Starvation deaths

1848. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there had been starvation deaths of farmers in various States;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years, year-wise and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the remedial steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No starvation death of farmers has been reported by any State Government/Union Territory.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Foodgrains to BPL families in Jharkhand and Orissa

1849. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that around 60 per cent of BPL families in Jharkhand have not been getting foodgrains from Government;

(b) whether the difference in allocation and realization of foodgrains are due to shortage of godowns of the FCI in the State;

(c) if so, the reasons which are plaguing the system in both Jharkhand and Orissa which are facing the brunt of its inefficiency; and

(d) the action plan of the Centre to fix responsibility on the inefficient officials and streamlining the process to secure foodgrains to the BPL families in both the States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) There are 23.94 lakh BPL families (including AAY families) in Jharkhand for which monthly allocation of 0.84 lakh tonnes of foodgrains

is being made under TPDS @ 35 kg. per family per month. As against this allocation the offtake of foodgrains by Jharkhand in the current financial year is about 65%. It is, therefore, not correct to say that around 60 per cent of BPL families in Jharkhand have not been getting foodgrains from Government.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. In Jharkhand the FCI has a storage capacity of 1.13 lakh tonnes against the average offtake of about 0.78 lakh tonnes per month for all the schemes during 2005-06 (upto October, 2005) which includes the average offtake of about 0.54 lakh tonnes per month for BPL families.

In Orissa there is a storage capacity of 5.95 lakh tonnes against the average offtake of 1.71 lakh tonnes per month for all schemes during 2005-06 (upto October, 2005) which includes average offtake of about 0.92 lakh tonnes per month for BPL families.

(d) The offtake of foodgrains under BPL in the States of Jharkhand and Orissa is around 65%.

The TPDS is implemented under joint responsibility of the Centre and State Governments. While the Central Government is responsible to provide requisite quantity of foodgrains to the State Governments as per the approved norms and also to move the foodgrains to the nearest designated FCI depots in each State/UT, the State Governments are responsible to lift the foodgrains and distribute the same to the identified beneficiaries under TPDS. In order to improve the efficiency, accountability and effectiveness in TPDS, Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 has been notified. The other measures taken by the Government in this regard are involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions, model citizen's charter, visit of Area Officers, constitution and deputation of vigilance committees task force teams to check irregularities and to inspect and monitor the functioning of TPDS in States/UTs. Conference of State Food Secretaries, State Food Ministers, meeting with All India Fair Price Shop Dealers Federation, and a meeting with all the Members of the Parliament was organized for strengthening of TPDS. Regional conferences have also been held with focus on the unique problems of the region and to facilitate strengthening of the TPDS, in a manner, which may be relevant to the local environment.

Sub-standard wheat and rice in FCI godowns

†1850. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the wheat and rice stored in the godowns of Food Corporation of India is sub-standard;

(b) if so, the amounts of wheat and rice separately lying there upto September, 2005 that was not fit for human consumption;

(c) whether there is any arrangement to check the quality of this wheat and rice; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Food Corporation of India (FCI) was holding a quantity of 67.43 lakh MT of wheat and 35.59 lakh MT of rice as on 30.9.2005, out of which 124 MT wheat and 14851 MT rice were in lower category or sub-standard. Lower category stocks, though within PFA limits, are not issued for Public Distribution System without upgradation. Further, a quantity of 0.12 lakh MT wheat and 0.11 lakh MT rice, which was damaged and not fit for human consumption, was also available with FCI as on 30.9.2005. Majority of the damaged stocks got affected by cyclones and flash floods in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Gujarat.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. There exists an established procedure to chcek the quality of foodgrains stored in the godowns of FCI. Technical Assistant of the Depot inspects the stock under his custody once in every fortnight. Assistant Manager (QC) superchecks the stored stocks once in a month. Deputy Manager (QC) of the district superchecks the stored stocks once in three months. District Manager has to inspect two godowns under his jurisdiction in a month. Senior Regional Manager also inspects two depots in a month in his region. Zonal Manager has to inspect atleast one depot in his zone in a month. In addition, surprise checks of stock accepted and

†*Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.*

stored in the depots are conducted by the officers of this Ministry and also by the squads of FCI hqrs., respective Zonal and Regional Offices from time to time.

Cases and vacancies in consumer courts

†1851. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases pending in various consumer courts of the country alongwith the number of vacancies and since when, State-wise;

(b) the action initiated by Government to fill up vacant posts and by when the posts will be filled;

(c) whether with a view to dispense speedy justice to the consumers, Government will instruct the consumer courts to work on the lines of Lok Adalats; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) Information in this regard, as furnished by National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) is enclosed as Statement (*See* below).

(b) Under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, it is the responsibility of the State Governments/UT Administrations to set up the State Commissions and District Fora in their States/UTs and ensure their effective functioning, including filling up vacant posts of Presidents/Members in these consumer fora. However, being nodal Department in the field of Consumer Protection, the Department of Consumer Affairs has been periodically taking up with the State Governments and UT Administrations the question of strengthening the functioning of the consumer courts by providing adequate infrastructure and filling up the vacancies of Presidents/Members. State Governments have been asked to take all possible steps to enable early filling of vacant posts in consumer fora.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) and (d) As per information furnished by NCDRC, President, NCDRC has given directions to the Presidents, State Commissions of all States/ UTs that the District Fora and State Commissions should earmark one day every week to dispose off cases by holding Lok Adalats.

Statement

Cases and vacancies in Consumer Courts

(i) Statement of cases filed/disposed of/pending in the National Commission and State Commissions

Sl. No.	Name of State	Cases filed since inception	Cases disposed of since inception	Cases pending	% of disposal	As on
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
National Commission		**40110**	**32236**	**7874**	**80.37**	**31.10.2005**
1.	Andhra Pradesh	17606	15008	2598	85.24	31.10.2005
2.	A & N Islands	57	55	2	96.49	30.6.2004
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	33	22	11	66.67	30.6.2005
4.	Assam	1846	990	856	53.63	31.12.2004
5.	Bihar	10688	6700	3988	62.69	30.6.2005
6.	Chandigarh	5090	4998	92	98.19	31.10.2005
7.	Chhattisgarh	2547	2041	506	80.13	30.6.2005
8.	D & N Haveli/ Daman & Diu	11	11	0	100.00	31.12.2004
9.	Delhi	23949	20468	3481	85.46	30.11.2005
10.	Goa	1661	1497	164	90.13	31.10.2005
11.	Gujarat	21821	18266	3555	83.71	30.6.2005
12.	Haryana	27832	15846	11986	56.93	31.10.2005
13.	Himachal Pradesh	4426	3768	658	85.13	30.9.2005
14.	Jammu & Kashmir	4512	3981	531	88.23	31.12.2003
15.	Jharkhand	2067	1752	315	84.76	30.6.2005
16.	Karnataka	17251	15426	1825	89.42	31.8.2005

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	Kerala	19606	15574	4032	79.43	31.8.2005
18.	Lakshadweep	12	12	0	100.00	31.10.2005
19.	Madhya Pradesh	20280	18077	2203	89.14	30.6.2005
20.	Maharashtra	31378	17876	13502	56.97	31.7.2005
21.	Manipur	47	20	27	42.55	30.6.2003
22.	Meghalaya	145	125	20	86.21	30.6.2005
23.	Mizoram	92	31	61	33.70	30.9.2005
24.	Nagaland	71	59	12	83.10	30.6.2005
25.	Orissa	14030	7304	6726	52.06	30.9.2005
26.	Pondicherry	109	80	29	73.39	31.10.2005
27.	Punjab	15759	11341	4418	71.97	30.9.2005
28.	Rajasthan	31524	21381	10143	67.82	31.10.2005
29.	Sikkim	27	26	1	96.30	30.6.2005
30.	Tamil Nadu	17620	15927	1693	90.39	31.10.2005
31.	Tripura	866	772	94	89.15	30.9.2005
32.	Uttar Pradesh	43670	12433	31237	28.47	31.8.2005
33.	Uttaranchal	2464	2097	367	85.11	30.6.2005
34.	West Bengal	10590	8924	1666	84.27	31.10.2005
	TOTAL:	389797	275124	114673	70.58	

(ii) Statement of cases filed/disposed of/pending in District Fora

1.	Andhra Pradesh	153303	146542	6761	95.59	31.10.2005
2.	A & N Islands	311	294	17	94.53	30.6.2004
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	261	223	38	85.44	30.6.2005
4.	Assam	10004	9096	908	90.92	31.12.2004
5.	Bihar	58962	46528	12434	78.91	30.6.2004
6.	Chandigarh	23600	22894	706	97.01	31.10.2005
7.	Chhattisgarh	20881	18581	2300	88.99	30.6.2005

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	D & N Haveli	70	54	16	77.14	31.12.2004
9.	Daman & Diu	0	0	0	0.00	0
10.	Delhi	148388	138276	10112	93.19	30.6.2005
11.	Goa	5020	4033	987	80.34	31.10.2005
12.	Gujarat	97046	79471	17575	81.89	30.6.2005
13.	Haryana	141113	121861	19252	86.36	31.10.2005
14.	Himachal Pradesh	41104	38432	2672	93.50	30.9.2005
15.	Jammu & Kashmir	10436	8247	2189	79.02	31 3.1999
16.	Jharkhand	23144	20440	2704	88.32	30.6.2005
17.	Karnataka	86209	82774	3435	06.02	31.8.2005
18.	Kerala	142620	135705	6915	95.15	31.8.2005
19.	Lakshadweep	52	48	4	92.31	31.10.2005
20.	Madhya Pradesh	92132	86641	5491	94.04	30.6.2005
21.	Maharashtra	161279	141872	19407	87.97	30.6.2005
22.	Manipur	916	881	35	96.18	30.6.2003
23.	Meghalaya	359	339	20	94.43	30.6.2005
24.	Mizoram	1863	1623	240	87.12	30.6.2004
25.	Nagaland	246	205	41	83.33	30.6.2005
26.	Orissa	61182	57334	3848	93.71	30.9.2005
27.	Pondicherry	331	266	65	80.36	30.9.2005
28.	Punjab	90156	83616	6540	92.75	30.9.2005
29.	Rajasthan	188881	178166	10715	94.33	31.10.2005
30.	Sikkim	175	169	6	96.57	30.6.2005
31.	Tamil Nadu	87286	84038	3248	96.28	31.10.2005
32.	Tripura	1529	1367	175	89.40	30.6.2005
33.	Uttar Pradesh	325754	255227	70527	78.35	30.6.2005
34.	Uttaranchal	26069	23255	2814	89.21	30.6.2005
35.	West Bengal	55482	52282	3200	94.23	30.9.2005
	TOTAL:	2056164	1840780	215397	89.52	

(iii) Information Regarding Vacancy Position in the State Commissions and District forums

Sl. No.	States	State Commission	District Forum		As On
			President	Member	
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	No Vacancy	2	0	30.9.2005
2.	A & N Islands	No Vacancy	0	0	30.6.2004
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	No Vacancy	2	2	30.9.2005
4.	Assam	No Vacancy	0	14	30.9.2004
5.	Bihar	No Vacancy	0	12	30.11.2005
6.	Chandigarh	No Vacancy	0	0	30.6.2005
7.	Chhattisgarh	No Vacancy	0	9	30.11.2005
8.	D & N Haveli	No Vacancy	0	0	31.12.2004
9.	Daman & Diu	No Vacancy	0	0	31.12.2004
10.	Delhi	No Vacancy	1	0	30.11.2005
11.	Goa	No Vacancy	0	1	30.9.2005
12.	Gujarat	1 Member	9	20	30.11.2005
13.	Haryana	No Vacancy	4	28	30.11.2005
14.	Himachal Pradesh	No Vacancy	0	0	30.6.2005
15.	Jammu & Kashmir	1 President, 1 Member	0	0	31.8.2005
16.	Jharkhand	No Vacancy	0	1	30.6.2005
17.	Karnataka	No Vacancy	2	1	30.11.2005
18.	Kerala	1 Member	5	6	30.11.2005
19.	Lakshadweep	No Vacancy	0	1	30.6.2005
20.	Madhya Pradesh	2 Member	2	35	30.11.2005

1	2	3	4	5	6
21.	Maharashtra	No Vacancy	0	8	30.11.2005
22.	Manipur	All vacant			31.1.2003
23.	Meghalaya	President	0	0	30.6.2005
24.	Mizoram	President	0	0	30.6.2004
25.	Nagaland	No Vacancy	0	0	30.6.2005
26.	Orissa	No Vacancy	1	2	30.6.2005
27.	Pondicherry	1 Member	0	1	30.6.2005
28.	Punjab	No Vacancy	1	1	30.9.2005
29.	Rajasthan	No Vacancy	0	9	30.11.2005
30.	Sikkim	No Vacancy	0	0	30.6.2005
31.	Tamilnadu	No Vacancy	0	17	30.11.2005
32.	Tripura	No Vacancy	0	0	30.6.2005
33.	Uttar Pradesh	No Vacancy	13	24	30.11.2005
34.	Uttaranchal	President	0	3	30.6.2005
35.	West Bengal	1 Member Lady	0	3	30.11.2005
	TOTAL:	5 Pres. 9 Mem.	42	198	

FCI borrowings

1852. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether FCI has accumulated recoverables worth Rs. 17,000 crores from the Ministry of Rural Development for foodgrains supplied for its welfare schemes;

(b) whether FCI is facing financial constraints, having to borrow funds from SBI-led consortium at exorbitant interest rates for grain procurement;

(c) whether FCI borrowings from SBI-led banks now total Rs. 33.000 crores at 8.15% compound interest; and

(d) whether Government would bail out the FCI to sustain its welfare schemes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) The outstanding dues payable by Ministry of Rural Development to the Food Corporation of India (FCI) for food grains supplied for its welfare schemes as on 30.11.2005 were Rs. 23,524 crores.

(b) No, Sir. 8.15% per annum interest, compounded monthly, is charged by the SBI led consortium from the FCI.

(c) The total cash credit utilisation as on 28.11.2005 is Rs. 28,094 crore.

(d) Does not arise.

Wheat rotting in FCI godowns in Punjab

1853. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons that a large quantity of wheat is rotting every year in the godowns of Food Corporation of India in Punjab;

(b) the details in this regard during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) the manner in which the rotten wheat is disposed off; and

(d) the remedial measures taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The following stocks of wheat held by the FCI in its godowns at Punjab had become damaged i.e. unfit for human consumption, during the last three year:-

Year	Quantity (Lakh MT)
2002-03	0.08
2003-04	0.12
2004-05	0.06

The above stocks had become damaged during storage in open complexes due to exposure to the vagaries of weather. The extent of

damage to wheat stocks when compared with total procurement of wheat in the respective years is around 0.18%, 0.34% and 0.18% respectively and thus negligible taking into account the volume of operations.

(c) Damaged wheat is disposed off for non-edible purposes like cattle/ poultry feed, industrial use, manure etc. These stocks are offered to those State Government Departments/Organisations which are bonafide users under Rate Running Contract in the first instance. The balance stocks are sold through open tenders to the parties registered with the FCI.

(d) Covered storage space has been increased by the FCI by hiring about 20 lakh MT capacity godowns in Punjab during the last 3 years. This has considerably decreased the storage of wheat in open complexes and minimised damages on this account. Besides the FCI is storing foodgrains scientifically and taking due care of prophylactic and curative treatments and pest control measures to save the foodgrains stock from deterioration.

Streamlining FCI

1854. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a declining role for the Food Corporation of India in view of the vast capacity of private godowns' space hired;

(b) to what extent private operators can store, release and buy grains without the need of the FCI;

(c) whether Government propose to reduce the visibility and role of the FCI in the near future;

(d) the steps proposed to streamline the FCI and also reduce its rental charges for private godowns;

(e) whether any outside management agency has studied the FCI; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Food Corporation of India (FCI) hires private godowns capacity under compelling circumstances where

FCI/Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) State Warehousing Corporation (SWC)/Government Agency godowns are not available. The economic criterial is kept in view for godowns rent of CWC/SWC godowns.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal to reduce the visibility and role of the Food Corporation of India.

The FCI has issued instructions for dehiring of surplus private storage capacity wherever the utilization is less than 25% or capacity has been declared as surplus.

All out efforts are also made to optimize utilization of installed capacity of FCI depending upon the pattern of procurement/offtake.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. M/s. Mckinsey & Co. was engaged by the FCI to conduct a study to bring about substantial and sustainable efficiency improvements in the FCI's functioning, inlcuding *inter-alia*, recommendations on new business models and structural changes, to reduce subsidy burden while improving its effectiveness in meeting the Government's social objectives. The major recommendations made by M/s. Mckinsey & Co. are given in the enclosed statement (*See* below). The recommendations made are at various stages of implementation.

Statement

The major recommendations made by M/s Mc Kinsey and Co.

- Adopting a multi-tiered debt structure and reducing working capital borrowings.
- Optimizing rail movement using a linear programme.
- Consolidating handling and road transportation contracts within regions and outsourcing to large logistic service providers.
- Purchasing consolidated requirement of gunny bags through open tender and reimbursing farmers/millers/arthias for supplying paddy in used gunnies.
- Procuring directly at FCI depots or rice mills in Punjab and Haryana.
- Renting excess capacity to third parties, i.e. private grain companies, logistic service providers.

- Appointing 3rd party agency to monitor stock moved by rail and to check transit losses.
- Reimbursing State agencies for stocks carried by them prior to actual delivery to the FCI.
- Revision of staffing norms and initiatives to increase staff productivity.
- Revising incentive norms, balancing labour capacity and retiring excess labour.
- Reducing obligatory expenses by having the market intermediaries perform additional tasks in the mandis.
- Reimbursement of procurement incidental to State agencies to be bench marked to the cost incurred by the FCI, linking custody and maintenance charges to quality of storage infrastructure, and building year to year cost reduction/efficiency improvement clauses in the supplier contracts/ MoU with State agencies.

Rehabilitation of displaced by Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary

1855. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that State Government of Karnataka has requested for release of the balance amount of Rs. 132 lakhs for the rehabilitation of people displaced due to the formation of Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary; and

(b) if so, by when the amount is likely to be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The State has been requested for sending a detailed proposal in this regard.

Pollution by slaughter houses

†1856. DR. CHHATTRAPAL SINGH LODHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of legal and illegal slaughter houses which are causing all kind of pollution in the country State-wise, along with pollution caused;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether Government have taken action against such slaughter houses against whom the complaints have been received, if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken to ensure supply of clean drinking water in such areas;

(d) whether Government are proposing to cancel the licences of such polluting slaughter houses;

(e) whether Government propose to constitute a committee of MPs and local representatives to conduct the inquiry in this regard; and

(f) whether it is also fact that working group of Reserve Bank has suggested to make a "Risk Fund" in this regard;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (f) The information is being collected and would be laid on the Table of the House.

Western Freeway Sealink

1857. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:
PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal for a Western Freeway Sealink, from Worli Nariman Point in Mumbai has been pending for final approval of Government;

(b) whether environmental clearance thereto was accorded subject to certain conditions two years ago, but has been held up, if so, the main issues that remained to be sorted out;

(c) the steps taken and being taken to sort out the same; and

(d) whether the project is intended to be implemented under the BOT system and if so, the names of the interested parties?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The Central Government had accorded clearance to Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC) from environmental angle

to the Worli-Nariman point sea-link road project on 10.2.2003 subject to the compliance with the stipulated conditions therein. As per condition No. (xiii) of the environmental clearance, MSRDC is required to transfer some of land to Ministry of Defence before commencement of the project.

(c) State Government of Maharashtra has held a series of coordination meetings with the Headquarters, Western Naval Command.

(d) The Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation has infromed that the project is intended to be on BOT basis.

Emission of greenhouse gas

1858. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI RAASHID ALVI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has asked developed countries to reduce their emission of greenhouse gases with respect to baseline of year 1990 over a period of time and to provide technical and financial assistance to developing countries to facilitate cleaner development there;

(b) whether efforts made so far, by developing countries have been dismal and it is essential for these countries to take up greenhouse gas mitigation measures;

(c) if so, what are other steps Government have urged to do in this regard; and

(d) to what extent developing countries have agreed to the suggestions made by India in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) According to the Kyoto Protocol of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), developed countries (Annex I Parties) have to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by at least 5.2 per cent from their 1990 emission level. Under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the Protocol, greenhouse gas reduction project activities would be taken up in developing

countries and the carbon credits they generate would be bought by developed countries to meet their commitments under the Protocol.

(b) to (d) Under the Kyoto Protocol only developed Countries (Annex-I Parties) have qantified commitments to reduce their Green House Gas emissions. Developing countries have no such quantified commitments but are required to develop, periodically update and report their national inventories of anthropogenic emissions of Green House Gases in accordance with the Framework Convention and take other appropriate measures to mitigate climate change and facilitate adequate adaptation to climate change. India and a number of other developing countries have submitted their initial National Communication in fulfilment of these obligations. A number of developing countries, including India have also taken measure to mitigate climate change such as encouraging renewable sources of energy, energy efficiency in thermal power plants, afforestation and reforestation schemes and have also promoted projects under the Clean Development Mechanism of the Protocol which reduce emissions of Green House Gases.

Essential forests cover for protection of environment

1859. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the projected extent of forest cover in each State of the country which is essential for the protection of environment and the actual cover in each State;

(b) whether Government propose to take any steps to increase the forest coverage in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof including fund allocation thereof, State-wise; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) As per the National Forest Policy (1988), the national goal envisages a minimum of one-third of the

total land area of the country under forest or tree cover. In the hills and in mountainous regions, the policy aims at maintaining two-third of the area under such cover in order to prevent erosion and land degradation and to ensure the stability of the fragile ecosystem. The forest cover State-wise as per the 'State of Forest Report (SFR)-2003' published by the Forest Survey of India (FSI), is given in the enclosed statement-I (*See* below).

(b) and (c) The following steps have been taken to increase the forest cover in the country:

(i) The Ministry of Environment and Forests has launched a major afforestation initiative called the National Afforestation Programme (NAP) during the Tenth Five Year Plan for regeneration to degraded forests and adjoining lands through people's participation. The people-centric approach is manifested in the two-tier decentralized institutional set-up of Forest Development Agencies (FDAs) at the forest division level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) at the village level for the implementation of NAP.

State-wise funds released during the period from 2002-03 to 2005-06 (as on 30.11.2005) under NAP is given in the enclosed Statement-II (*See* below).

(ii) The Ministry of Environment and Forests is also implementing Integrated Forest Protection Scheme, primarily for strengthening the infrastructure for protection of forests to control illicit fellings, fires and encroachments, etc.

(iii) Guidelines for rationalization of felling and transit regulations for tree species grown on non-forest private lands have been issued to the State Governments and Union Territories to encourage private tree plantations.

(iv) State Governments and Union Territories have been requested to formulate and implement a comprehensive Media Plan to create mass awareness about tree planting.

(d) Does not arise.

Statement-I

Forest cover in State/Union Territories in India as per the 'State of Forest Report (SFR)-2003' published by Forest Survey of India (FSI)

(Area in Km)

State/Union Territory	Total Forest Cover
Andhra Pradesh	44,419
Arunachal Pradesh	68,019
Assam	27,826
Bihar	5,558
Chhattisgarh	55,998
Delhi	170
Goa	2,156
Gujarat	14,946
Haryana	1,517
Himachal Pradesh	14,353
Jammu and Kashmir	21,267
Jharkhand	22,716
Karnataka	36,449
Kerala	15,577
Madhya Pradesh	76,429
Maharashtra	46,865
Manipur	17,219
Meghalaya	16,839
Mizoram	18,430
Nagaland	13,609
Orissa	48,366
Punjab	1,580
Rajasthan	15,826
Sikkim	3,262
Tamil Nadu	22,643

State/Union Territory	Total Forest Cover
Tripura	8,093
Uttar Pradesh	14,118
Uttaranchal	24,465
West Bengal	12,343
Andaman and Nicobar	6,964
Chandigarh	15
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	225
Daman and Diu	8
Lakshadweep	23
Pondicherry	40
TOTAL:	678,333

Statement-II

Funds released to Forest Development Agencies under National Afforestation Programme (NAP)

(As on 30.11.2005)

Sl. No.	Name of State/Union Territory	Amount Released (Rs. in Crores)
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	36.55
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	10.29
3.	Assam	17.00
4.	Bihar	6.44
5.	Chhattisgarh	42.17
6.	Goa	0.64
7.	Gujarat	24.49
8.	Haryana	28.02
9.	Himachal Pradesh	23.27
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	18.46

1	2	3
11.	Jharkhand	24.51
12.	Karnataka	70.17
13.	Kerala	8.63
14.	Madhya Pradesh	48.72
15.	Maharashtra	39.67
16.	Manipur	19.21
17.	Meghalaya	7.63
18.	Mizoram	45.97
19.	Nagaland	28.31
20.	Orissa	34.33
21.	Punjab	4.92
22.	Rajasthan	17.83
23.	Sikkim	17.99
24.	Tamil Nadu	50.08
25.	Tripura	16.05
26.	Uttar Pradesh	70.62
27.	Uttaranchal	21.31
28.	West Bengal	18.40
	TOTAL:	751.68

Pending project report for development of townships on different rivers in Maharashtra

1880. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether project reports for development of townships on different rivers in Maharashtra have been submitted to the Central Government for approval under the National River Action Plan, under the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the cost of the different projects, and since when the same are pending;

(c) the reasons for delay, at what stage they are pending and by when the same are likely to be cleared for implementation; and

(d) the cost escalation incurred?

THE MINISTER OF STATE THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) No project reports for development of township on different rivers in Maharashtra have been received in this Ministry. However, the Government of Maharashtra has submitted river pollution abatement projects reports for Kolhapur town along river Panchganga (costing Rs. 49.74 crore) in the year 2002, and in the year 2004 for Wai town along river Krishna (costing Rs. 53.83 crore), Pandharpur town along river Bhima (costing Rs. 26.61 crore), Prakasha town along river Tapi (costing Rs. 4.62 crore), Paithan town along river Godavari (costing Rs. 12.80 crore), and Nawapur town along river Rangawali (costing Rs. 4.55 crore) for approval under the National River Conservation Plan during the Tenth Five Year Plan. These projects could not be considered for approval due to constraint of funds during the Tenth Five Year Plan. However, it was suggested that the State Government may undertake these projects out of the State Plan provisions by seeking necessary funds from the Planning Commission including exporing the possibility of initiating the projects with public-private partnership.

(d) Does not arise.

Vaippar-River-Linking Project

1861. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is proposal for the Vaippar-River-Linking project pending with Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government conducted detailed studies on the impact of such a project would have on the environment in the Southern Kerala;

(d) whether Government considered the fact that most of the related areas in Kerala experience acute water shortage particularly in the summer season;

(e) if so, whether the projects, if implemented, further accelerate the situation; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?